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SAINTS AND SINNERS;

OR,

IN CHURCH AND ABOUT IT.

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VOL. I.

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# SAINTS AND SINNERS;

OR,

IN CHURCH AND ABOUT IT.

BY

DR. DORAN, F.S.A.,

AUTHOR OF "TABLE TRAITS," "HISTORY OF COURT FOOLS,"  
"THEIR MAJESTIES' SERVANTS," ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

HURST AND BLACKETT, PUBLISHERS,

13, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1868.

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21985.

LONDON:

SAVILL, EDWARDS AND CO., PRINTERS, CHANCERY STREET,  
COVENT GARDEN.

NOV 1886  
JUL 1887  
MAY 1888

**Dedication.**

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TO THE

REV. HENRY AUGUSTUS HOLDEN, M.A.,

THESE ILLUSTRATIONS

OF WHAT MAY BE CALLED "CASSOCK AND HASOCK,"

ARE, FOR OLD FRIENDSHIP'S SAKE,

AND WITH ALL THE DEEP FEELINGS THAT THE MEMORIES OF  
SUCH A FRIENDSHIP CAN INSPIRE,

Inscribed,

BY

THE AUTHOR.



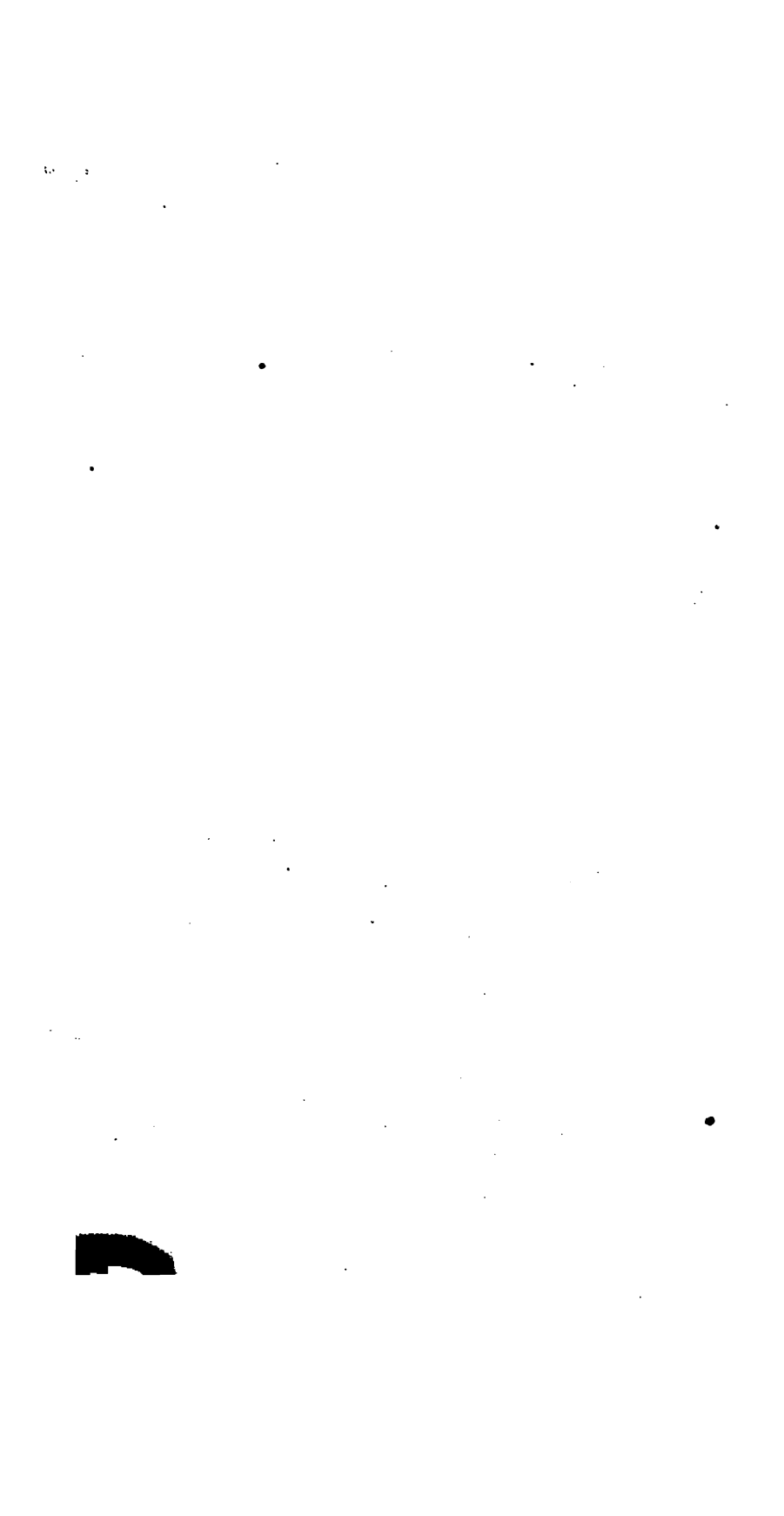
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# SAINTS AND SINNERS;

OR,

IN CHURCH AND ABOUT IT.

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## THE MAGNATES OF THE OLD CHURCH.

IT is said to have been the comment of one who had been perusing a certain portion of Scripture, that "it had happened so long ago and so far off, he didn't believe a word of it." In similar bewilderment, the old Bishop of Ferns shut up "Gulliver's Travels" with the profound remark, "Amusing, but I can't believe half the fellow says." To either of these conclusions a puzzled reader may fairly come after exploring the Old Church narrations of the Old Church times. He will not have so much of truth before him as the above Scripture student had, nor so much of fiction as the Bishop found in "Gulliver," but he will probably be as summary as the one and as perplexed as the other.

From the second century to the time of the Hephtharchy, the illustrations of Church history suit the imaginative artist rather than the historian. The painter may imagine the figure of the proto-Christian


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king Lucius, or a group of Cornish listeners thronging round St. Kebius, or the people watching the joyously pious builders of the sacred edifice founded by the ex-prince Cadoc in Llan Carvan. The artist may depict the ardent admirers of St. Nennoca trying to restrain her from setting sail to convert the Gauls ; or the Somersetshire crew gaping at St. Keyne as she turned the serpents into stones. St. Main, leaving this his native land to settle in "Little Britain," and the apocryphal Winnifred, sanctifying her well, might furnish subjects for a fresco ; while the chief of all the saints of the period before the Heptarchy, St. David, making his disciples till the fields without aid of beasts, and driving his plough-team of four-and-twenty panting and pulling students through the tough soil round his monastery, might make a subject for Rosa Bonheur herself. There would be nobody to contradict the probability of the representation ; but the representation would with some people establish the fact : Lucius must have lived, say the Roman Catholic hagiographers, because there is a medal extant which bears his effigy !

During the period of the Heptarchy, the lady saints, who were all of royal birth, and one of them, St. Wereburga, having the blood of all the Saxon kings in her veins, assert themselves in a more or less remarkable manner. Some of them must have given rise to a large amount of gossip. They resolutely refused to marry unless they might live as if they were




not married. Nevertheless, at three of these ladies, the people of Ely, the cottagers at Coldringham, and the good folk up at Whitby, probably opened their eyes to the utmost when they saw the coy Etheldreda, the stately Ebba, and the shy Hilda, founding double monasteries. There, during many subsequent years, saintly scholars lived in community with the primest of virgins. As Etheldreda, Ebba, and Hilda received monks as well as nuns, so John of Beverley received nuns with his monks. Very pleasant communities, probably! but those rude reformers the Danes destroyed them with the rest, and one can hardly regret that this old religious fashion of things was never restored.

Those high-born ladies (all now canonized) who founded or joined nunneries, furnished some of the grandest spectacles of the day. Crowds stared at the pomp with which a company of kings and princes carried St. Wereburga to Ely, where she was about to take the veil. Spectators could hardly tell which was the finer ceremony—that when St. Sexburgha went through the form of marriage with King Ercombert, or when she opened her famous nunnery in the Isle of Sheppey. Thanet almost worshipped St. Mildred for making that isle famous for its monastery at Minster, which made Sheppey envious, and where the veiled sisters spoke excellent French. The folk about Barking, too, were proud enough to see St. Ethelburga's workmen busy in raising an abbey there; but the

Barking nuns were not cheerful ladies. Their sole desire, they said, was to die as soon as possible, yet their refectory was furnished with the best means of living comfortably. The only downright merry circumstance connected with the unco guid people of this period is to be found in a love-passage in the life of St. Frideswide, of whom Oxford is, I suppose, sufficiently proud. This holy princess edified English maidens by her anti-matrimonial principles. From all her lovers she would not choose one. Prince Algar, the most persevering of the suitors, one day sought her so eagerly, that, to escape from his ardour, she hid herself in the pigsty! The servile brother who helped her out must have had a pretty story to tell to his fellows.

In those days the ludicrous trod on the heels of the perilous. That saintly king of the East Angles, St. Ethelbert, wooed Alfrida, the daughter of King Offa and Quendreda. The maiden was willing, but her mother was not. She hated the young king, but she coveted his possessions, and she murdered her daughter's lover that she might herself obtain his dominions.

When we are told that this was a period of progress, we must not conclude that there was no simplicity balancing the grandeur. If Ethelbert, the first Christian King of England, built the cathedrals of Canterbury, Rochester, and St. Paul, we must remember that they were built of wood and thatched with straw or reeds. The men about Lindisfarne saw a new



thing when St. Eadbert covered his church there with lead. The men about Jarrow and Weremouth must have been perplexed in the extreme when they saw the strange men and heard the strange tongues of the workers in stone and other artificers, whom St. Bennet Biscop had employed to lead the labour which was to result in the two renowned structures dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul. But Bennet was a scholar and a gentleman—a man of taste—one who had travelled, and could see what his eyes looked upon—a power which is not possessed by every traveller. Bennet, however, was not the only scholar and gentleman of this Heptarchy period. St. Adhelm, who founded Malmesbury Abbey, the glory of Wilts, cultivated English poetry, and could sing a good song in Latin and in Saxon. St. Bede bears a more familiar name, and we are still interested in the works of one of whom it long continued to be said that England had never produced so great a scholar.

During the earlier portion of this period, Scotch (Irish) missionaries looked upon the English as too savage a race for such refined gospel messengers to trouble themselves about. Yet some of the best men in England went forth to convert the more savage German, and St. Boniface was the first of numerous Englishmen who accomplished a really divine work in Germany, and who have left names there that continue to be honoured at this day. Our own native missionaries at home never spared themselves. St.

Wilfrid, once so dear to the English, thought least of himself, most of his work, and it is a pity that he and one or two other worthy men have dropped out of our Calendar. St. Adhelm, we are told, used to read his psalter every night, standing in a pond, up to his neck, the uses for which process are so obscure that we may forbear to inquire into it. St. Chad, when Bishop of York, performed all his visitations on foot. St. Erconwald, Bishop of London, would seem to have had less humility. He not only was carried, but his horse-litter healed the sick on whom its shadow fell, and chips from it, after his death, were remedies for all diseases, which they could cure.

It is curious to trace the influences by which the English kings who have been canonized, were once moved. While they were wavering, they would fain strike bargains with Heaven. If God will give a victory, the waverer will turn Christian. The semi-pagan looks to the skies, and promises a newly-born daughter to the service of God, if the father may only be able to destroy his enemies. Northumbrian orthodox armies, suffering defeat, went back in dudgeon to the old faith. Redwald, King of the East Angles, thought to sit in safety on two stools. He built a church, at one end of which was an altar for the sacrifice of the mass, at the other an altar for sacrifice to the old British idols. The good simple man was loth to fling away a chance, and he has, accordingly, been shut out of the Calendar. Perhaps, of all the pagan


kings, Penda of Mercia was the most praiseworthy. He was a ferocious savage, as much so as his orthodox contemporaries. Penda's utmost scorn and fury were expended on his enemies who professed to be Christians and lived as if they had no belief in their profession. Edwin, King of Deira, was at best one of the dalliers. In a vision he had been promised greatness if he would become Christian, and he said "he would,"—expecting fulfilment of the promise. Something was conceded to him, but he would make no step in advance. At length Pope Boniface bought him by the dainty device of sending a silver mirror and an ivory comb to his queen, Edilburga. The lady was convinced of the excellence of a religion, the head of which so thoroughly understood woman, her wants, and her weaknesses; and she compelled her husband to be of that way of thinking.

We all now know, from the ancient chronicle recently edited by Dr. Todd, that Hibernia's hero, Brian Boru, was a dreadful sneak at Clontarf. I am sorry for it. I am equally sorry for the once popular English hero, St. Oswin. That king was so humbly self-denying as to put in practice the maxim about discretion being the better part of valour. St. Aidan expressed his fear that a king so humble was not likely to live long; and the fear was realized. Such prophetic expressions were to be expected from men who knew what was certain to happen. St. Cedd told a king of the East Saxons who had good-naturedly dined

with an excommunicated person, weary of being isolated, that he would soon die in the very house where he had sinned. So it came to pass, and nobody was surprised when the well-meaning king was murdered.

Some of the royal Christians of the time deserved little sympathy for being summarily dealt with. When the great Ethelbert died, his son Eadbald married his father's widow. St. Lawrence, then Archbishop of Canterbury, urged him in vain to put away the poor wretch. Lawrence thought of running away from such an accursed court, for which St. Peter, as the archbishop lay asleep, scourged him till there was hardly a square inch of flesh unlashd on the prelate's back. Why the apostle did not ply the whip round Eadbald's loins, cannot of course be conjectured. Lawrence showed the stripes next morning to Eadbald, and that Christian king, looking at them, confessed that they proved he had done wrong, and that he would not again be found guilty—of marrying his father's widow!

Lawrence did not understand the application of law as St. Hedda did. The latter assisted St. Guthlake (who, when he founded Croyland Abbey, in the fens, is said to have been tempted as St. Antony was, and to as little purpose) in drawing up a code of laws. Among the first enactments was, that any man who forgot to pay his Church dues, should forfeit forty shillings—more than as many pounds in present value. A thief was condemned to lose his hand; but this was



perhaps of less account at a time when the cross which St. Oswald set up, before his victorious battle against Cadwalla, was still standing. A little moss, or a chip from this cross, could perform any miracle; and even an orthodox thief might hope to be thus favoured. The exemplary Father Meehan implies, in a recent work, if I rightly understand him, that it does not much matter how great a villain a man may be, if he only stick to the orthodox Church.

The four English saints of these early periods who were dear to English hearts long after the Normans had given place to the Plantagenets, were the above St. Oswin, St. Oswald, the later St. Cuthbert, and St. Wilfrid. Every county had, no doubt, its local favourite, and named with affectionate respect many a saint as honoured by its neighbours; but all over England there was laid up in every house a homage of love and reverence for those saintly men. "God be merciful to their souls, as St. Oswald said!" is an old, old English proverb, which shows how a good word dropped opportunely may influence the hearts of a nation, long after he who has uttered it has mouldered to dust. If the chaff could only be got away from the pith of their stories; if the cyclopean structure of enormous lying which has been piled over the beautiful and simple truths of the lives of Cuthbert and Wilfrid especially could be blown up, we might take these men to our hearts again, for they really belong to us. Stupendous liars have marred the



story and destroyed its moral, and its healthy influence ; but " God be merciful to their souls, as St. Oswald said !"

The alleged miracles worked by Cuthbert—who, by the way, was the only English saint of humble birth down to the close of the Heptarchy—may be read in numerous scattered biographies. I shall have to allude to them, passingly, again. I will only say here that Wilfrid was the great champion of Roman supremacy in England—a sort of little à Becket—perfectly honest in his convictions, a " free inquirer" himself, but allowing no liberty of questioning to others. This was the shady side of a character otherwise noble. If all his miracles were like the one he performed on the " dead child" of the widow of Teddafrey, the English of that time must have been easily satisfied. " Wilfrid," say the chroniclers, " knelt in prayer, then placing his right hand on the heart of the child, he felt that it beat, and so restored it to life !"—which many a modern doctor does with sick patients whose hearts continue to beat. Among the alleged miracles of Cuthbert, one describes his spirit on stormy nights, lustily pulling a boat out towards shipwrecked wretches tossing in the merciless billows ; or he steers his bark amid the breakers with his magic pastoral crosier. I believe him to have had courage enough to have succoured the storm-tossed ; for flesh and blood have done it off the same island, in the same seas. Even M. de Montalembert, who seems to think every one

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but an ultramontanist a fool or a knave, cannot but allow that Protestant hearts and arms have addressed themselves to the same sort of noble work off Ferne Island. It is not so long ago since Grace Darling and her old father pushed their boat in dark and stormy nights from the shore of that very island of Cuthbert and Ethelwald, and plunging through or over the wildest waves, plucked from death their drowning fellow-creatures, and pulled back again with their rescued freight, and with no sense save of having fulfilled their bounden duty.

Of the English saints between this period and the Conquest, the best remembered and the worthiest are St. Dunstan and St. Edward the Confessor. Indeed it may be said that St. Swithin is better remembered than either of them, less for the project which King Ethelwolf adopted, that the tithe of the land should belong to the Church, than for his supposed connexion with fair or foul weather. One English saint, Clarus, excited the universal surprise of the French by his indifference to their light o' love queen. The English Joseph was scarcely pitied by his Gallic friends when the queen caused him to be murdered for his lack of gallantry. Another of the English saints whom our ancestors greatly revered was Odo, Archbishop of Canterbury, but he never appears in public without the air of a conjuror. He was what those plain-speaking English called a *word-smiler*, or *eloquent* prelate; but he was a trickster. In giving a glass of wine to King

Athelstan he made the sign of the cross over it, as if its refreshing power lay in the action. Standing by the side of the king in a *mêlée*, in which Athelstan was disarmed, Odo touched him on the left ribs, and a sword was straightway seen hanging at his side. Even at this early period, the intelligent Canterbury clergy were bold enough to maintain that the idea of the Real Presence in the Sacrament was inconceivable to them. "Look here !" said Odo, taking up the Host ; " I break this in two ; now, what do you see ?" The clerical gentlemen looked closely and confessed they saw gouts of blood dropping from it. " Then," said Odo, " there is an end of the controversy." " Seeing is believing," rejoined the other party, and went away convinced !

During a great part of this period the Danes rioted or ruled in the country. One of their most illustrious victims was St. Elphege, Archbishop of Canterbury ; but King Knut honoured the man whom his countrymen had slain ; and perhaps one of the grandest shows of that period was when the prelate's body was moved from St. Paul's, and the king, with Queen Emma and a brilliant throng of courtiers, soldiers, and priests, accompanied it to the river side. With the body, that illustrious company embarked in a fleet of boats, and to solemn music and sacred song they descended the river, all London gazing reverently at the water-funeral bound for Reculver and Sandwich, on its way to Canterbury. One of the nine St. Williams whom

the English tailors took for their compound patron appears at this time, but he is of small note, as was to be expected from his especial clients. On the other hand, the Norman tailors selected Our Lady, keeping the 8th of September as their great festival. M. Peignot (under the pseudonym of "Philomneste") says that the French tailors took the Trinity for their patron; and that ribald wits ascribed the selection to this circumstance—namely, that tailors when commissioned to make a garment, always cut cloth enough for three. This, however, is allowed to be a calumny, no tailor cutting quite sufficient for two!

But the great saint of this period in England was that St. Dunstan whom the Anglo-Saxon tailors might have taken for their protector, as no man of his time was more handy with his needle. But then he was equally skilful in embroidery, painting, in delicate work of the goldsmith and in the tougher work of the blacksmith. He was therewith the terror of rascally kings, and the great reformer and restorer of his time. It was a time when the country was in ruins, and morals and religion were annihilated; so fearful had been the Danish visitation, to churches, monasteries, palaces, and cottages alike. It must have galled the English when they did not dare cross a bridge while they saw a Dane coming over it, nor venture to let him pass without saluting him, unless they were ready to be scourged till the blood ran down to their heels.

St. Dunstan, and St. Ethelwold, his worthy aide-de-camp, helped to retrieve the ruin. They set up the prostrate church, brought back the clergy to decency of life, cheered the commons, and had tolerable success with everybody but the king, though *he* was brought into subjection at last.

Such kings thought they possessed the privilege of impunity. When Edgar's caprice so directed, he did what other kings are said to have done—swooped down upon the sanctuaries of the nuns, and carried off any pet lamb of the fold that took his particular fancy. Yet, in Edgar's case, even this was made to yield saints to the Calendar. The beautiful but reluctant Wulfhilda, whom he abducted, was subsequently canonized, and their illegitimate daughter—a nun who refused a throne—is to this day honoured by English Catholics under the name of St. Editha.

But the kings were not all of bad quality. Perhaps Edmund, king and martyr, would not have been so long remembered, only that he was murdered by order of his mother, and that for several hundred years the knife was exhibited at Faversham with which he probably was *not* slain. It is St. Edmund, king and martyr, who is the model for all young princes. We should look in vain for one now who would shut himself up for a whole year in order that he might learn the psalter by heart; and if we were to find one we should perhaps think he had wasted his time. St. Edmund is our native Sebastian: he was plied with


arrows till he was quilled like a porcupine ; and his shrine was so frequented at St. Edmund's, Bury, that as many thieves were to be found there as at a modern "fashionable" confirmation.

As Dunstan shines among saints below the throne, so Edward the Confessor (who, however, had some failings common to us all) is distinguished among canonized kings. The light of his time reaches to our own, and gleams of it are to be seen in periods between the past and the present. His carrying a strumous man on his back whom he set down cured, enabled (strange as it may seem) Dr. Samuel Johnson to witness a spectacle, of which, otherwise, he probably would not have been a witness. It led to Edward and his successors touching for the evil ; and Johnson, when a child, saw Queen Anne play the last part in that ceremony. The Westminster Abbey of to-day springs from the Abbey of the Confessor ; and much of our common law is what remains unchanged by statute of those laws of the same Confessor by which the people claimed and monarchs promised that England should be ruled.

And, finally, this connexion between the past and the present reminds me of another illustration, with which this subject may conclude. In the church records of this early period we often meet with prisoners, bound by chains or ropes, who, on praying at certain shrines, or to particular saints, are suddenly able to extricate themselves as easily and as dexte-

rously as the two jugglers, the brothers Davenport. I allude to the "rope trick," the very earliest notice of which in England occurs in Bede's "Ecclesiastical History," under the date A.D. 679. In that year a battle was fought between the kings Egfrid and Ethelred, on the Trent. In the army of the former, Abbot Tunna, of Towcester, Northamptonshire, had a brother named Imma. Having heard that Imma was slain on the vanquished side, Tunna sought for his body, and having found one which he took for that of Imma, the abbot carried it to his monastery, buried it, and offered up masses every morning, generally about nine o'clock, for the repose of the soul of the defunct.

It happened, however, that Tunna had got hold of a wrong body, and had put up prayers for a soul that did not belong to it! Imma had been sorely mauled in the fray, but after lying senseless a day and night among the dead, he recovered sufficiently to make an attempt to escape from the field unobserved by the victors who kept possession of it. He was, however, intercepted, and carried before King Ethelred's earl. Now Imma, though noble, was not a gentleman, for on the earl asking as to his identity and vocation, Imma promptly uttered a lie, describing himself as a poor peasant, with a wife to support, and earning a livelihood by bringing provisions to the army. The king's earl at once detected the imposition, and he ordered the noble impostor, as soon as his wounds were



healed, to be imprisoned and bound. The commands were obeyed; but on the very first visit of his gaolers they found him sitting in freedom, the ropes at his side. Again and again they confined his limbs in those bonds; "but," says Bede, "as soon as they that bound him were gone, his bonds were all loosened." Why his captors did not watch their captive is not stated. The earl had him into his presence, and asked him, "whether he freed himself by spells such as are read of in *fabulous* stories." Imma, who had already been guilty of an untruth, replied, in substance, that he was unconseious how it was all effected, but he knew that his brother had been singing masses for his soul, and that consequently his body profited by what his soul did not then require. How Imma knew what Tunna was doing, and how the holier man did not know that the soul for which the masses were chanted had never been tabernacled in the body he had brought from the field, is not explained. The earl promised to "do him no harm" if he would be truthful as to his quality; and having learnt who he was and whence he came, the earl did him no harm, but sold him as a slave to a Frison, who straightway carried him up to London. Imma was conveyed in bonds; but as his brother said masses for him daily, the bonds, no matter of what they were composed, always fell off, we are told, about the time each mass was completed. The Frison grew weary of this unrestrainable young fellow, and liberated him, on



parole, to return if he was unable to procure ransom-money. Imma obtained the sum required from Lothaire, king of Kent, and honestly sent the price of freedom to his ex-master, the Frison. Such is the story which may be found in fuller detail in the 22nd chapter of the 4th Book of Bede, to whom it was told by persons who had heard it recounted by Imma himself.

There is one Saxon saint in the calendar who belongs to both the Saxon and Norman period—namely, Wulstan, Bishop of Worcester, who refused to resign his bishopric to William, on the ground that it had been conferred on him by the royal Confessor, who alone could deprive him of it. In proof of what he advanced, Wulstan drove the pointed end of his crozier deep into the stone of St. Edward's tomb, and he bade any one draw it out who could. Many tugged at it only to ignominiously fail; but Wulstan took it away as easily as if the Confessor's grasp had opened to yield it. The Conqueror considered the test triumphant, and Wulstan retained his dignity till the year 1096.

With the exception of Cuthbert, the early English saints of either sex were of royal blood, or of the noblest families. Near the graves of some of them fountains of pure crystal water are said to have gushed forth in testimony of their holiness. Worship at wells became a natural, perhaps a venial, superstition. It was a form of gratitude for service rendered; and not

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even yet are thankful people to be convinced that the waters that are supposed to possess a healing power are not in some way divine, and are therefore to be revered. "*Tous les dieux ne sont pas partis*," says the French song, and we shall see that the Old Folk in the Old Church sang to the same tune, and that their successors, however faintly, echo the burden of the song.

## THE OLD FOLK OF THE OLD CHURCHES—

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WHEN it is remembered that the St. George of our calendar is but an inheritor of the virtues once ascribed to Adonis, that the worship of Isis is still observed by our Romanist brethren when they honour the anniversary of St. Ursula, and that the leading principles of Druidism had such strong hold on our English peasantry that Wesley and other chiefs of Dissent gained the latter all the more easily by adopting the former,\* one might be pardoned for asking—"Who *are* the Old Folk, and *where* are the Old Churches?"

The truth is, that the first have not ceased to have descendants, nor the second to win followers. When Seneca said—"Where a spring rises or a river flows, there should we build altars and make sacrifices," he expressed an article of faith which was practically recognised by the Old Church which was then dying out, and which was sentimentally adopted

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\* See "Curious Myths of the Middle Ages," Second Series. By S. B. Gould.


by the New Church then lately born and fiercely suffering.

Seneca, whom St. Jerome respected, thus unites two eras; he believed in Arethusa and had faith in the healing powers of her fountain. There are many yet living who remember Munden, the comic actor, walking daily from Hampstead to *his* Arethusa at King's Cross. Munden believed in St. Chad, and had faith in the healing powers of his fountain. Seneca and Munden represent extremes wide apart; but within the limits which they represent, wells and fountains were the true popular chapels of the period. Some of the old pagan philosophers probably laughed at them as being of a Low Church quality. One of our early Christian kings, Edgar, in the tenth century, forbade the common practice of worshipping at fountains. The Christian folk, however, clung to the old heathen and not unnatural habit. In the twelfth century the Church compromised with the ultra-reverential people, and reverence to and worship at springs was permitted under episcopal licence. This licence was given wherever a Christian saint could be found to preside over the waters. Giraldus Cambrensis himself worshipped at St. Winnifred's Well, in Flintshire, and he has left his testimony of the miraculous efficacy of the saint and her waters.

With us, St. Chad has been and continues more than ever Arethusa was to the people whom she healed and refreshed. He is the very patron of wells and

well-shrines and chapels in England ; and he is believed to have very much surprised the British mothers of his time by immersing their babies at the baptismal ceremony. Internally and externally water was the best of things, with St. Chad, as it had been with Pindar. One of the stirring scenes in old English popular religious life was when the holiday pilgrims used to resort to Chad's tomb, scrape the sacred dust from about it, and mixing it with the water from his well, quaff it to his memory and their own bodily profit. A large district of London unconsciously do something of a similar fashion still. The New River rises from the springs between Hertford and Ware which supplied St. Chad's Well. The water which he is supposed to have sanctified still flows through the earth which was believed to have been made sacred by him. Pilgrims no longer go to the stream ; but the waters reach them in their homes, and a man might do a worse thing after a "tubbing" than thank St. Chad, who first adapted it to babies.

A generation ago, a devotee might still stoop and drink at St. Chad's Well. A William the Third edifice then covered, and a Dutch-looking garden surrounded it. An old man and woman were the last presiding priest and priestess. On the wall above the spring hung a full-length portrait, in oils, of a fat red-faced man in a faded scarlet coat, a lace cravat, and a red night-cap. Charles Lamb suggested that the original was a butcher of the reign of Queen Anne ; but the



old keeper believed it to be a genuine portrait of St. Chad, as most people did (he remarked) who visited the spring: whereat the old keeperess would express her inability to conjecture what would happen next!

The old popular religion connected with the holy London wells has ceased. You may question every man you meet between Holborn Bars and King's Cross, and not one in a hundred will be able to tell you where to find the waters which still flow on, but which are now enclosed. It is much the same with the other out-door chapels for the people of the olden time. The well of St. Pancras would be as hard to strike as a well in the desert. The *Fons Clericorum*, the well about which the ecclesiastical clerks used to disport themselves of an evening, is only marked by an ugly pump with a menacing handle, warning you away. The "*Fons Sancti Clementis*," to which the Westminster boys once made little pilgrimages, is hidden beneath a low house in low Holywell-street. The *Fons Sacer*, or holy well above all others, had lost its purity before the Benedictine nuns abandoned Shoreditch; while St. Bride, all but utterly exhausted herself in the copious yield of water from her springs to supply the exigencies of George the Fourth's coronation.

Well-worship has died out in London; but at least the memory of it has not been altogether extinguished in the country. The nymphs of the waters have

naturally lived longest in the valleys and among the flowers.

The early Church was, perhaps, not quite disinterested in regulating the popular reverence at wells. The people who used to hang threads on the bushes as offerings to the saint were taught to leave a money offering at the shrine erected for the purpose. This paid, the Cornish folk might run joyously to their springs and offer pins or pebbles to the imaginary divinity, or draw what conclusions they pleased from the bubbles which arose on the water as they stamped on the ground at the side. St. Kilda had no favour for any one who stooped to the brink of her fountain without a gift for her chaplain, and St. Keyne would cheat either bride or bridegroom who ran to win mastery at home by being the first to quaff at her spring, unless their footing had been previously paid. The sick lass or waning lad who had performed all due ablutions, and gone through all the necessary prayers before drinking of the well of St. Tegh, in Denbighshire, would never find the malady of which either suffered pass into the fowl which the patient held under the arm, unless four pennies had been deposited at the shrine. Examples of reverence and of gratitude, in the spirit enjoined by Seneca, were given by persons of the highest condition. You may still see little votive offerings at St. Winnifred's, but in the old time, countesses hung up at that popular shrine their best velvet gown. Henry VII. was the

last English monarch who left a gift at Walsingham, but as late as 1688, an English king, James II., said his prayers at St. Winnifred's.

There were two wells at Walsingham; they were closely adjoining, and one of the sights of the day was to look at the wishing pilgrims who resorted thither. The wisher knelt on bare knee, between the two wells, plunged his hands into each above the wrist, and then silently wished. It was a necessary step to success that the pilgrim should never make known his wish. Before the Walsingham wells sank into mere wishing wells, they were accounted sovereign for all bodily pains, if the waters were reverently drank, and generously paid for. But the wishing wells had a wonderful reputation for which there is small ground for surprise. A girl drinking at the well at Cadbury, Somersetshire, finding the water to her taste, wished she were mistress of the fountain. Subsequently, the lord of the estate married her. So ran the legend, and till a very recent period, women would go down there, half-ashamed, dip their thimbles into the waters, whisper their wish, and drink off the little draught, in good hope of lucky consequence.


Some wells drew to their brinks as many devotees as the churches did to the altars, from especial instances of miraculous qualities. Here, were wells that were invariably full. There, were springs that regularly ebbed and flowed. The well at Oundle, in Northamptonshire, "drummed" whenever some important



event was pending. Baxter himself attests it, but the well has never "drummed" since it beat the dead march announcing the approaching demise of Charles II. The waters were of a Jacobite quality, and never paid the same compliment to any other monarch who subsequently died in England.

The Scottish wells are a little beyond my limits, but as connected with religious practices, it may be noticed that the attendant superstition was of a grosser nature than in England. At St. Michael's well in Banffshire, wives and girls used to go and pray for the health of husbands and lovers. The presiding spirit, however, was not the archangel, but an enormous fly, the very lord of flies, a Scottish Beelzebub. According as he looked grave or gay, sullen or sportive, the worshippers drew their conclusions with respect to the safety or peril of those for whom they were concerned. This medico-religious sort of inquiry was common. At St. Andrew's well, Isle of Lewis, the consulter put a light bowl tenderly down upon the water. If the bowl turned towards the sun, the sufferer at home would be healed; but if away from it, the malady would be fatal. Again, at St. Oswald's, the under linen garment of the invalid was spread on the water. If it floated, the invalid would still spread his sails over life's stormy ocean. If it sank, even so would it be with him, and the waters of oblivion would close over his head.

The kirk tried to crush the superstition, but it



might as well have tried to stop the sources of the wells from flowing. In 1628, the devotees were arrested, thrust into prison, put into sackcloth, mulcted in a good many pounds Scots, and condemned to the bread and water of a Scottish gaol. All in vain. Late in the last century, a solitary devotee might frequently be seen silently wending to the well of Airth. On the brink, he broke silence, by repeating the creed; then, he deposited his mean offering—some worthless rag—and dipping his bowl into the stream, carried the sacred water home, sure of its being a specific if the bearer only took care that the bowl did not touch the ground.

These are a few illustrations of the water-worship, if it may be so called, which was recommended by Seneca, and which was at least tolerated in England by the Church. It is a worship which has not even yet altogether gone out. Dove Dale still sends out grateful devotees to the annual flowering of the five wells at Tessington. This observance, on Ascension day, is in honour of the wells remaining full during the otherwise great drought of 1615. On the first Sunday in May, people still assemble at Craigie Well, (Blackish of Ross,) and secure their health for the ensuing year by drinking the waters before the rays of the sun have touched the stream. Buxton every year dresses her taps in honour of the fountains erected by the Duke of Devonshire; and Wirksworth remembers the boon bestowed a hundred years ago,

when water pipes were first laid down in the town, by holding a festival that is worthy of Flora.

While the people of the earlier days were so addicted to well-worship that King Edgar had to denounce it as sacrilege, the same people, piously minded, after their fashion, clung fast to the edge of the druidical mantle, and revered the rocks as well as the waters that sprung from them. The Northern people were especially tenacious in this respect. The first Christian priest in the neighbourhood of Wallsend looked with scorn at the old altar there, with its perforated centre, and at the dozen upright stones which stood around it. In vain would he try to persuade his flock that these stones did not represent the Saviour and the Twelve Apostles. Time out of mind they had been held sacred, from an era of which the good folk knew nothing, when they symbolized the prolific powers of Nature and the Sun. To the sun and the months had succeeded the Redeemer and his Apostles. The folk would have it so, let the priest say what he might. If they wanted to make a bargain sacred, they went and shook hands upon it, over one of those grey and solemn stones. It was calling the holiest in heaven to witness the obligation. If parents desired to make a sick child whole, when leeches had failed, they passed the little patient through the perforation, and went away full of hope, if not of confidence. The Christian priest might invite them to set up a candle before the picture of the Virgin, and the pious people would doubtless obey

the invitation ; but when the "*Ave Maria*" had been uttered, those primitive English Christians, honest half-pagans as they were, would still turn to the symbols of the old mysterious worship (a worship older than that of Zeus and his Olympus), and they held on by the old ship while they sailed in the new. A singleness of religious feeling was at the bottom of this double or divided action.

The earnest early folk, however, yielded their hearts to receive new impressions, and within the arms of their love they embraced new heroes and new legends, and accepted stories of other resurrections than the One on which are based all hope and all assurance of a future life. Accordingly, in the olden time, saunterers by the banks of the Ouse were occasionally startled, they said, by the appearance of a leaden coffin of exquisite workmanship slowly rising from the river ; as they intently gazed at the strange floating object it began slowly to descend beneath the waters. When the rapt beholders spoke of what they had beheld, the reverend old people in that Bedfordshire district would quietly remark that it was the tomb of the great Mercian King Offa, which had been swept away in a great flood, with the little chapel in which it had been placed, near Bedford. The apparition proved that if the Great King had been submerged he could no more be kept down in death than in life. Then, scores of curious people would go down to the Ouse, gaze till their eyes ached, and return home, vexed at seeing

nothing glide by but the waters. Again, the reverend people would quietly remark, that the royal tomb never rose to the sight of those who expressly sought it; in which remark those reverend persons were perfectly correct.

Nevertheless people made holiday, that they might look for the rising of Offa. Even so the good folk about Battle Abbey, long after Harold fell on (or fled from) the field, were wont to go out after heavy rain to gaze upon the earth on which the showers had brought out the stains of the blood of the wounded and the slain. This was a more solemn sort of holiday than that on wedding mornings near St. Keyne's Well in Cornwall, when the villagers were wont to assemble to witness the race between bride and bridegroom to be first to taste the water. The winner secured supremacy in the household. A different incident occurred, on like occasions, at St. Michael's Mount. There was no race for the villagers to witness, but there was a trial of the bride's courage. If she was bold enough to sit on the lofty tower battlement, called St. Michael's Chair, she gained mastery over her husband for ever. The stone seat was subdued to the fashion of the burthen by which it had been often pressed! And even as the Sussex people were used to go out after showers to look for blood-stains in the battle-field of Hastings, so the Leicestershire people, in and about Lutterworth, were wont, in much later times, after a deluge of rain, to go down to the brook

into which the ashes of Wiclif had been thrown, to testify to the fact that the brook, so sanctified, had ceased to flood the meadows through which it ran. Whatever the spectators beheld, their interpretation of the sight was according to their religious opinions.

While some looked after signs, others had recourse to the saints; and among those others were a class who contrived to splice the world and religion, much as the Duke of York did when he used to post down to Newmarket on a Sunday to be in time for the Monday's races. On such occasions he travelled with a Bible and a Prayer Book, and based his hopes of good luck on reading, as he *spanked* along, the psalms and lessons for the day!

In the olden time then, in England, Hertfordshire possessed a shrine to which even horse dealers resorted with faith, devotion, and some selfishness. There is a village there called Pallets, formerly Eppallets, and originally, it is said, Hippolytus, from St. Hippolytus, the martyr of the reign of Gallus. Now, the name signifies a *horse-driver*, and it was turned to good, that is, profitable, account in the early times. In Chancey's "Hertfordshire" we are gravely told how horses were blessed at the high altar of the church, and how great a concourse of people attended to see the ceremony. Norden is more distinct in his details. From him we learn that, Hippolytus having been considered a "great tamer of colts," a sort of Rarey of his day, and an experienced "horse leech,"

all English equestrians who rode through Herts felt bound to turn towards and pull up at "St. Pallet's." It seems that these pious riders brought their horses into the church, even up to the high altar where the holy horseman was shrined, and where a priest continually attended, to bestow such fragments of Eppallet's miracles "upon their untamed colts and old wanton and forworne jades as he had in store, and did avail so much the more or less as the passengers were bountiful or hard-handed, but he that was coy of his coin had but a cold and counterfeit cure."

The horse-fair at Howden (Hovadene, or rather Houedene) flourished without the aid of a saint like the one in Hertfordshire. The once-famous place, however, had a powerful patron-lady of its own, who was not without a certain sense of humour. This was St. Osuna, sister of King Osred. The rector of the parish kept household with a north-country damsel after a fashion which St. Osuna was determined to reprove at the earliest opportunity. This occasion presented itself when the rector's arch-hussey one day came to church. The saint's tomb was there, projecting from the wall like a wooden seat. The reverend gentleman's "lady," out of contempt or fatigue, sat down thereon—and she never forgot it. She was unable to get up again. Her cry for help brought a host of villagers to her aid; and if they at last pulled her away, it was not through their strength, but because St. Osuna chose to let her go, after the

flaunting minx had sworn she was sorry for the past and had promised amendment for the future. But even then, St. Osuna did not let her loose from the seat the girl had sacrilegiously assumed, without making her leave a token behind her, which consisted of something more than fragments of the wench's dress. No Howden lass, after that, cared to hear any reference being made to sitting on St. Osuna's bench.


Occasionally the early kings were far from being off with the old faith even long after they were on with the new. The East Anglia sovereigns were wont to look behind them while they drove the plough, like King Redwald, who kept at Rendlesham an altar for the mass and another for his old idols. Perhaps there was more real reverence in this than at first sight appears. The time, however, came when no saint in Suffolk was much cared for except the royal martyr, St. Edmund. The ground for this reverence was, that when searchers went out in quest of Edmund's severed head, they only succeeded through the lusty guiding-shouts of the head itself. A Suffolk man would once have brained any sceptic who might have grinned at such a story, and after such murder the champion would have gone with reverence to the shrine.

But if reverence knelt at the shrine of St. Edmund at Bury, rascalry sometimes bowed at the altar. There was a cunning Suffolk woman who used to kiss the altar of the royal saint and martyr with such felonious



fervour, that she contrived to carry away in her mouth many of the little offerings in gold and silver which lay on the altar itself. The saint, however, caught her as sharply one day as St. Osuna caught the Howden rector's concubine. As the woman was licking up some glittering booty, she found her tongue and lips sticking as tightly to the altar as if she had kissed it in a hard frost. Her "roar" delighted the priests, and these called all the Jews and disbelieving Christians in Bury to come to the church and witness the miracle. They and crowds of curious people beheld the audacious creature bending with her face on the altar, but silent now through awe. In that posture she remained the whole day, a testimony, it was said, of the saint's power. The story spread through Suffolk; but there were so many weak points about it, that Jews and other unbelievers were not so much edified as the clerical gentlemen of Edmundsbury expected.

Then as at St. Edmund's, so at St. Dunstan's shrine at Glastonbury, the thieves were as much attracted by its richness as the pious folk by its holiness. Like the French thieves in jewellers' shops, called in their slang, "*avale-les-crus*," or *swallow-them-raws*, and who contrive to carry off in their mouths some of the diamonds they affect to view with admiration through short-sighted glasses, the Glastonbury rogues used, in kissing the shrine, to carry off bits of the gold, or even precious stones, between their lips. The monks were




at last compelled to place the shrine out of reach, whereupon the disappointed thieves became fatally critical. They asserted that no remnant or relic of St. Dunstan lay within the shrine, and the monks were fain to confess that Canterbury had all that was mortal of him, but that the shrine contained relics as holy, if the world only knew it. Glastonbury went out of fashion.

During many hundreds of years, not merely crowds of natives but many foreigners from the remote parts of Europe resorted to Bamborough, to view the unwithered hand of the royal English saint, Oswald. It was the hand which pointed to the silver dish, which he commanded, with the viands which it held, to be given to the beggars who were clamouring for alms at his palace gate. Bishop Aidan prayed that the hand might never wither. After the battle of Maserfield (A.D. 642) Oswald's body was dismembered by order of Penda, but his right hand found its way (it was said) to Bamborough, where for nearly nine centuries it attracted the folk, who believed that it remained undecayed within the shrine of which they only saw the exterior. Men took the dust from his tomb as a sovereign remedy for many diseases; but in the Tudor time the hand disappeared, the dust lost its efficacy, and Northumbria lacked the festival days which used to make her folk hilarious.

It was not always common folk that were to be met on their way to favourite shrines; nor was their busi-

ness always about horses. A glance at the Household Roll of Bishop Swinfield, of Hereford, enables us to see Thomelin, son of Corbet, hastening to the shrine of St. Thomas of Hereford with oblations. Is Thomelin's royal master, Edward I., ill, and in need of intercessory prayers? Not at all! His favourite falcon is sick, and Thomas of Hereford is implored to work a cure. The bird does not recover, and anon we meet the great Plantagenet's officer on the road to Canterbury, to pray and pay for the poor falcon, at the shrine of the greater St. Thomas. The lesser Thomas appears to have aroused himself at this, and to have cured the invalid bird, for again we meet with the son of Corbet carrying a waxen image of the recovered falcon to the shrine at Hereford, where, in the name of his master, the English Justinian, the messenger deposits the fees, and he offers the image, as a testimony of gratitude to Thomas of Hereford for services which were refused by Thomas of Canterbury.

The old orthodox Anglo-Saxon folk had their susceptibilities roughly tried, and their prejudices rubbed all the wrong way, by the proud Norman clerical gentlemen who came over to England. The latter had a sort of contempt for the saints of the soil, and a strong suspicion about Anglo-Saxon relics. They would take nothing on trust. They began with a want of faith. Now, the good people of Evesham were exceedingly proud of their monastery and of all that it contained,



especially of the head of St. Wistan. But a Norman abbot was assigned to the leadership of the brethren there, and he smiled quietly (which is as aggravating a fashion as a man of peace can assume) when he heard of the relics. He said he would try them all by fire, and he *did*, very much to the horror of the country people. I fear the ordeal was too much for most of them, but St. Wistan's head conducted itself in a way that was long talked about in the country. It was heroically impassible while in the fire, but on being taken from it the sweat of the Saint's brow rolled down his face in odoriferous liquid beads. It was a little yielding to circumstances which even the Norman abbot could not find fault with. He adopted the head, and for years after, Sussex men who wiped their brows in the dog-days, "*dashed*" themselves, or worse, "if 't warnt hot 'nuff for St. Wistan hisself!"

The saints were much relied on, universally, down to the period of the Reformation. In 1554. it was said, by Michael Wood, that a score of years previously few people could repeat the Lord's Prayer in English, understand an article of faith, or a point of baptism, or knew anything of Catechism or Commandments. "If we were sick of the pestilence," he says, "we ran to St. Rocke; if of the ague, to St. Pernel, or Master John Shorne. If men were in prison, they prayed to St. Leonard. If the Welshman would have a purse, he prayed to Darvel Gathorne. If a wife were weary of her husband, she offered oats at Paul's, at London

to St. Uncumber.”\* There was not much more of edification in the people mentioned in Adams’s “Divine Herbal,” who “tossed their religion about as merrily as their cups,” and who, fancying that Martin Luther constituted as many persons as names, were some for Dr. Martin and others for Dr. Luther.

In pre-reformatory days, preachers and others spoke of *Saint* Ambrose, *Saint* Anthony, *Saint* Augustin, and so on; the reformers, however, dropped the prefix, and called them Ambrose, Anthony, Augustin, and so forth. Thereupon, the Continental Romanist preachers and writers increased the honorary titles of those good men, and styled them Monsieur St. Ambrose, and the like. In the time of Cardinal Perron there were still some preachers who followed an old and more elevated courtesy, and always spoke of the saints as *Monseigneur* St. Jerome, or Ambrose, Anthony, &c. It was after hearing one of these old-fashioned preachers that the Cardinal remarked—“The worthy man does not seem to be on familiar terms with the Fathers of the Church, nor even to have much knowledge of them, since he treats them with the compliment of ‘my Lord.’”

The saints who were canonized by the people rather than by the Church, claim a word of notice here.

The old English loved heroic men—men who, being dead, they could worship with all their hearts as saints, and, if occasion seemed to serve, as martyrs also. The

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\* Cited in Wordsworth’s “Eccles. Biog.,” i. 166.

**f**irst Prince of the Blood who was executed in England furnishes an example of this. Thomas of Lancaster was a cousin of Edward II. He was active in bringing about the death of Gaveston, and not nice-tongued in denouncing the king's nasty habits. This Plantagenet Earl was on the wholesome side of morals and politics, but with a dash of the demagogue in him, and an addiction to gallantry. He loved other men's wives more than his own, and he cared nothing what other men his own wife loved ; all which was thought to be part of the character of a knight devoted to the ladies as well as to war. His demagogic manners were shown by the "ugly rush" he made to stop the Parliament being convened at York, and by his insolence to the king, unclean scamp as that Edward was, when Lancaster and his followers mobbed him as he was passing southward by Pomfret. Those early Reform Leaguers spat cruel truths at the wretched king, who should have been sacred for the moment, since he could neither speak nor strike in his defence.

Ultimately, this "noble work" brought Thomas of Lancaster to the block. Whatever his vices may have been, he must have been a good Churchman ; for he was no sooner buried than miracles were performed at his tomb.

When Edward II. (A.D. 1322) executed his kinsman, Thomas Earl of Lancaster, he made a saint and martyr of the "friend of the people." There was a tablet or picture which the earl had caused to be painted and

suspended from a pillar in St. Paul's Cathedral, in commemoration of King Edward having made some concessions to popular rights. The city admirers of the dead earl rushed down to the Cathedral in 1323, and crowded in front of the picture to see what was going on there in proof that Thomas was a genuine saint. The testimony was offered in the shape of miracles. People were brought in crooked who walked out straight; others who were led in blind, or with their eyes closed, returned to the street without help and with their eyes open. Men and women, who were so deaf that they replied to no query put to them as they entered, heard and answered every remark while yet standing beneath the picture. We are told that other beneficial works of grace were shown there; and we may fancy with what eagerness the cockneys of both sexes went to witness these demonstrative performances. They insisted that the hand of God was in it; but the king, or king's government, would allow no hand to be at work to the detriment of the Sovereign authority. Accordingly, the picture was taken down—(it is worthy of notice that the piece of art was not destroyed)—and therewith was taken away the great wax taper which some *dévôte* had planted before the picture in honour of the popular saint. Nevertheless, credulous cockneys flocked to the pillar, as if *that* must needs have some of the earl's virtue in it. Circulation was impeded, and this was only restored by lodging in Newgate the

amateurs of miracles who would not otherwise stir when bidden to "move on."

In 1326, when Edward II.'s power had nearly gone, and his son was on the point of uncrowning him, they who had Thomas of Lancaster's picture in their possession once more affixed it to the pillar, and the people looked again with delight on the memorial of the people's friend. The amount of Gascony wine that was drunk in Chepe, on these occasions of public resort to the Cathedral, lightened many a heart as well as many a purse.

The report of this testimony to the virtues of Thomas of Lancaster brought crowds of English folk to Pomfret, where he suffered. From all quarters they were to be seen streaming to the Priory Church, within which he lay buried. Every pilgrim carried with him an offering to the tomb of the prince, who, though he was five times an earl, had but one neck. The pilgrimage was as much political as religious. It was a declaration of popular opinion against the Government. Edward suppressed it, and the miracles also. He shut up the Church and scattered the people, and thought peace and quietness would ensue. But the English folk were not to be shut up or suppressed. As they would not repair to the tomb, they went in crowds to the hill on which the scaffold had been erected, and knelt there in prayer to the new St. Thomas, through the live-long day, with some feasting time between. It was the people's way of making a



*demonstration* ; but, as a fresh body of them repaired to the hill one morning, they found it occupied by a strong force of Gascons, who were charged to repel all attempts on the part of the people to get possession of it. The "hated foreigners" accomplished their commission, but the English people cherished the memory of the princely and popular saint and martyr. They were debarred from repairing to his tomb or to the site on which his scaffold had been erected ; but some good man, with pious or profitable ends in view, secured Earl Thomas's felt hat, and very much they made of it. For many years it was in repute as a specific for headache, on payment of a fee. In the old Priory church it must have been a sight for gods and men to see a patient sitting on a low stool near the earl's tomb, with the old felt hat on his head waiting in steadfast faith till he got well, and then attributing his recovery to the hat of the earl, who in his day had had some love for the people.

This English Thomas was as dear to that ancient folk as ever English Wilfrid was in the olden days, and even in the days when the felt hat of Lancaster had ceased to cure headaches. St. Oswald and St. Cuthbert were holy and useful men, well revered by the old folk in the old churches of England ; but St. Wilfrid was their especially favourite saint : powerful to help those who were in need, and "no questions asked." Thus in that olden time, a solitary man might occasionally be seen anxiously and rapidly

making his way towards Hexham. He was a robber, or a murderer, or one guilty of high treason, flying from justice. Wide around the old northern monastery, founded by Wilfrid, were tall thin crosses placed here and there. For sight of one of these the eyes of the criminal were eagerly strained. His feet beat the ground more impatiently as he beheld one of the signs of, to him, a double safety. The breath of the pursuing officers might be almost on his cheek, their hands upon his shoulder, but if he had passed one of these crosses he was safe! The refugee had gained sanctuary—a privilege granted to Hexham's monastery in honour of its Anglo-Saxon founder. At other times, whole crowds of sullen men, terrified women, and sympathetic or indifferent children, their flocks and herds driving on bewilderedly before them, might be seen streaming in the same direction. Now and then the men and women would look back, and if they saw a cloud of dust in ever so remote a distance, there came a piteous wail from them, and a more persistent hurrying forward. These refugees were flying from the horrors of war; but once within the circle of Wilfrid's crosses, they were secure from all assault. The most fiercely cruel and unscrupulous of enemies, even the Galloway Picts, would not have dared to violate the sanctuary. They might gaze at the flocks, herds, horses, and young girls, but they would then turn away gnashing their teeth, and showering expletives as if blasphemy were a virtue.

What Wilfrid's crosses were to those who ran a race for life or death towards them, other signs in other places held out the same symbol of safety to those who could reach them. A haggard wretch runs at the very top of a speed which it half kills him to maintain, through the streets of Durham. The folk make way for him, knowing that he is flying for his life towards the sculptured bronze ring on the door of Durham Cathedral. They yield like right of unimpeded way to the equally eager pursuers; but their sympathies are with the pursued. If a joyous shout rose upon the air, it was a testimony of the popular delight that the foremost runner had got hold of St. Cuthbert, and St. Cuthbert of him. The bronze ring was tight within his grasp, and he had gained a sanctuary that was inviolable. Violation of St. Cuthbert's sanctuary incurred the wrath (it was said) of heaven. When this became known, the king's own sheriff would hardly have dared to drag the poor wretch from the ring as long as he had strength to lay a finger on it before he dropped beneath it and found security. When a baffled sheriff or his representative returned through the market-place, the priests at the cathedral gates smiled satisfactorily; while a joyous roar of delight issued from the throats of the exultant people. If the sheriff was a good-natured fellow, he took the matter in good part, as one who had done his best to win a race and had been fairly beaten.

There were other sanctuaries in the old days besides

those for offenders. The *Scriptorium* of the old monasteries was a rare refuge for scholars, artists, and gentlemen. There the monks copied manuscripts, painted the illustrations for them, and heard the news of the outer world from other monks tarrying among them, or from gentlemen who were travelling, and were the passing guests of a few nights. Most social "clubs" were those old *Scriptoria*. The Cistercians alone denied themselves the luxury. Each man of that fraternity had to work or read alone in his own cell. And much useful and curious work was accomplished there; some of it of a sort which enables us, as we remember what some of the old manuscript writers tell us, and compare it with modern discovery, to exclaim, that there is *indeed* nothing new under the sun. Thus, through the Venerable Bede, we know how Imma, in the performance of the rope-trick, anticipated the two jugglers Davenport; and the *Acta Sanctorum* only shows the commonness of that feat. The old copiers in the *Scriptorium* did not fail to transmit, when they were copying the alleged prophecies of Merlin, that particular one in which it is said that "the sea which is between Britain and Gaul shall be contracted into a narrower space, and on each shore shall one man hear another, and the land of the island shall be enlarged." This prophecy has, in fact, been fulfilled in the persons of the two telegram clerks—one at Dover, the other at Boulogne—who converse with each other and interchange messages through

the hidden wire which connects, conceals, reveals, and spreads their thoughts or instructions.

Merlin displayed no very marvellous foresight when he made this prophecy. We are apt to consider the telegram as a modern invention; but its application, if we may credit old chronicles, was well-known centuries before, in the wild woods of Broceliande—

“At Merlin’s feet the wily Vivian lay.”

In the “Polychronicon” of Ralph Higden there is an account of a large house at Rome, the value of which was said to be a third of the value of the whole world. This was an Imperial government office. In a certain hall therein were images of all the provinces, each with its provincial name on its breast, and a little golden bell hung round the neck. If in any distant province of the Empire there was trouble of any sort which threatened peril to the State, the image of the province swung round, and the bell on its neck rang out its little but significant alarum. At such signal the Roman telegram clerks rushed into the hall, made note of the intimation, but did not necessarily yield belief to the message. They hurried to the space in front of the house and gazed up at the roof, for confirmation or otherwise, of the alleged record from afar. On that roof was the figure of a horseman brandishing a spear. When the bell on the neck of the figure of the province in the hall sounded the alarm, the horseman replied to it or not according to circum-

stances. If it rang truly, then the image of the horseman speedily turned itself, with the spear pointed in the direction of the province; but if the clerks on looking upwards saw him simply standing at ease in the "first position," they knew that, however frightened the provincial officials might be who sent the message, it was entirely beneath the dignity of Old Rome to take notice of it. Here is circumstantial evidence of the existence of something like a telegram system in activity in the Roman empire. Higden must have received the tradition, in due course, in the fourteenth century, when he wrote; and if it may be credited in its main features, then the Romans sent and received telegrams, and their "Golden House" was the head office.

The Golden House was in some measure both a temple and a popular meeting-place. Mars was there revered, and news of importance delivered to the people. In London a double quality, religious and secular, distinguishes but one locality—to which we will now proceed—namely, St. Paul's Cross.

## LIFE ROUND PAUL'S CROSS.

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THE British Temple which stood, according to Stukely, on the banks of the stream afterwards called the Fleet, on the site of what is now Harp-lane, near Faringdon-street, sank into ruins before the proud fane of Diana which was reared by the Romans on the crown of the hill to the east, on the spot where now stands the cathedral church of St. Paul. But Paul's Cross preceded the cathedral. It is not an unusual circumstance to find old churches built on the foundations of Roman villas; but Roman temples seem to have been entirely destroyed, and the first sign of the presence and power of the new dispensation was that amid the ruins, the expositors of the better faith raised a simple cross, on ground given by the lord of the land, whereat till a church should be built they preached to the people, who sat to listen amid the wrecks of heathenism. Amid such a wreck Paul's Cross was probably first erected, and there the gospel first preached in ancient London.

The period, however, is uncertain. When the monks were fairly established and possessed the right of levy-

ing toll on all who resorted to the market which was held in the neighbourhood of their monastery, it was their custom to build a Cross, and exact their toll there from all comers and goers. Now the monks, or rather the friars, of St. Martin's, tabernacled near this spot. The market side (Chepe-side) was near, and the brotherhood had a vested interest in the dues which the market-people were liable to pay. Whether, therefore, the Cross at St. Paul's was a memorial of the victory of the first missionaries over the heathen, or of the money privileges of business-like friars, I am unable to say; it was, however, one of these two things—the standard at which the gospel was freely given, or the toll-house at which Christians were as freely fleeced. But, whatever its origin, Paul's Cross came to be a rallying point for people, and for divers purposes. Its serious character was not forgotten, and Londoners swore by their Cross, as pious rustics did by theirs, and by their family graves.

Some relic of the old worship of Diana, some fragment of the old *Tauropolia*, celebrated in her honour, survived to a comparatively late period, in England. Camden remembered having seen, when a boy, a stag's head, fixed on a spear, solemnly carried into and around the church, to the accompaniment of horns. "And I have heard," he says, "that the family of Baud, in Essex, who were bound to pay for certain lands, used to be received at the steps of the quire by the priests of the church, in their sacerdotal robes and




with garlands of flowers about their heads. Whether this was a custom before those Bauds were bound to the payment of that stag, I know not; but certain it is that ceremony savours more of the worship of Diana, and the Gentile errors, than of the Christian religion."

This religion did not cease to be preached at the Cross, even after the building of the first church of St. Paul, by King Ethelbert of Kent, in the year 610,—the year of the accession of the Emperor Heraclius, four years subsequent to the establishment of the papal dynasty, and six years after Mahomet had proclaimed his mission in the East. How long the first church stood is not known, but the old cathedral of St. Paul's was commenced in 1083. Little more than half a century later it suffered severely by fire, but the damage was repaired and progress made, till in the middle of the thirteenth century it had both choir and steeple.

Meanwhile the old Cross maintained its position. There is every probability that it was merely of timber, kept in repair, or renewed, till in 1382 it was struck by lightning and overturned in a severe shock of earthquake. It must have been even then a venerable memorial of the spot where the earliest tidings of the new dispensation were announced to the people of the rising city on the Thames.

The earliest notices we have of the Cross in its public character, belong to the thirteenth century, and



these refer to political rather than to religious purposes ; to proclamations rather than to preachings ; to the work of the magistrate rather than that of the priest. At one time there is an assembling of citizens who have alleged grounds of complaint against their own mayor, and there they explain to the king's officer standing at the Cross, who hears and promises to report. At another, the citizens go up to it in crowds, and there take oath of allegiance to the king, who thinks to secure loyalty by this uncertain process. Henry III. compelled all sons of citizens above twelve years of age to take this oath ; and on that day of 1259, there must have been a general holiday in London, and much crowding and tippling in Cheapside. Even the timid boys trembling at the solemn oath-taking, and in awe at what it did or did not bind them to, must have afterwards shared in the jubilation of their bolder fellows.

Later, they were enabled to understand how lightly oaths could be construed by the very sovereign to whom they had sworn fealty. There was a splendid gathering at the Cross in 1260. Priests, soldiers, and statesmen were grouped at and about it ; music rang in the air ; and the burgesses came in their best, for they had a part to take in the ceremony. They were indeed summoned to hear a *bull* from Pope Urban read aloud. By papal authority, the king was absolved of all perjury he might commit by breaking the oaths he had taken at the "parliament," as the as-

sembly was called, where county representatives were present, at Oxford. He had there sworn to reign rather than govern ; and now Pope Urban authorized him to govern and reign too ; in spite of the barons who had bound him on the sacrament to do only the former, under guidance of a great council. The people must have been puzzled about the true nature of an oath, as they streamed westward through Chepe ; but, to be sure, the parliament at which the king was sworn, was called the "mad" parliament, by the king and the pontiff.

In the century to which I refer, the Cross was the place whence all important news issued. Intelligence was not sent to people's houses, they sallied forth in order to procure it ; and it was served up to them not only with much stateliness but with much condescension. When nine bishops appeared at the Cross to proclaim papal confirmation of the charter of liberties agreed on between Henry and the barons, they had as splendid retinues as nine kings could have had. What scurried masses must have crowded around to witness that ceremony ! And how civilly were the folk treated in form, while they were crushed in fact ! They were even asked by the prelates if they understood the announcement that had been made to them ! The Cross was, in some sense, the popular Court, and kings before going over sea were wont to ride down to the old trysting place, and there take leave of their people. These often turned homeward with tears in their eyes,

for monarch and liegemen rarely came face to face on these occasions, without the latter being told of an increase in their taxes! So that there was something more pleasant to them in going to the Cross to hear Dean Ralph of Baldock curse all the diggers for treasure about the church of St. Martin's-le-Grand, than it was to look upon a king, when they had to pay so dearly for the sight.

It is only incidentally that we hear of preaching at the first Cross. For instance, the metropolitan prelate, Michael of Northbury, bequeathed a hundred marks to be lent to laymen on pledge; and he directed that if the pledge was not redeemed within a year, the preacher at Paul's Cross was to give notice that it would be sold within the ensuing fortnight. Thus secular business followed sermon, and so it went on till the original Cross was overthrown by the earthquake shock in 1382. The famous prelate and chancellor, Courtenay—a diocesan so loved by the people that when he had a quarrel with John of Gaunt, they showed their conviction of the duke being wrong by pulling his house down—collected monies for re-erecting the Cross, but Dean Nowel—he who invented bottled-ale, by accident—accused Courtenay, in a sermon which the Dean preached at the Cross, of having converted all the money to his own use.

The Cross, newly erected early in the fifteenth century, was a rare rendezvous for professional beggars. They could so much the more urgently petition passers-

by out of their pence, "for Christ's sake!" Their manner contributed a proverb to our language, and whenever lover pushed a suit, or any one sought an aid with vehement urgency, it was said of him that "he begged like a cripple at the Cross." The luckiest moment for the mendicants was when a corpse, on its earthward way, rested for a while at the Cross, that the rest and peace of the soul that had once inhabited it might be prayed for. Who could resist the Cross cripples when they not only expressed unbounded affection for the departed, but swore they would pray for the peace of his soul—for a consideration?

In the reign of Edward II., the dean and chapter made an attempt to gain exclusive possession of the ground about the Cathedral and Cross. The attempt excited the utmost wrath of all London, from the mayor down to the youngest apprentices. "The land is our land," they cried; "or, at least, the king's lay fee, granted of old to the people whereon to hold all their assemblages for divers useful purposes!" "It is our *curia*!" cried the scholars. "It is our folkmote!" screamed the apprentices. What would become of England if the London folk could not have free access, not only about the Cross, but into the great bell-tower? They had the privilege, and found it a pleasure, of tolling the bell to collect the people together whenever there was anything particularly agreeable to announce, or especially unpleasant to discuss and quarrel over. Liberty, Folkmote, Paul's Cross, and

King Edward for ever!—and mayor and citizens defended and maintained their rights.

As all the ground about the Cross was looked upon by Englishmen as their own peculiar meeting-ground, so did their sons, the London boys, appropriate the churchyard to themselves as their play-ground. Something more than play, however, now and then occurred there. As boys used, in the old bad times, to play at “French and English,” or, when no wars were a-foot, at Greeks and Trojans, so in ancient days the London lads took sides, as English and Scotch. Each party was under the command of a duly-elected king. On the feast of St. Ambrose, A.D. 1400, one of the fiercest of those fierce sports took place. The ardent and youthful cockneys fought with such vigour that not only were many wounded, but several were carried off the field, dead. Their blood had been stirred, the spectators do not seem to have interfered to check the bloody play, and on that festival of St. Ambrose the so-called Scottish king and his host were tremendously mauled by their excited brother-cockneys of the adverse faction.

To hear a prelate eat his words at the Cross afforded a rare holiday in one year of the reign of Edward III. Gregory XI. had been so incensed by the Florentines, who would not acknowledge his temporal power, that he issued a bull exempting all persons from paying debts due to merchants of that nation. Courtenay, Bishop of London, published the bull, at the Cross,

with favourable comment. The mayor no sooner heard his comment than he rode away and clapt the Florentine merchants in London into durance. Edward, however, not only freed them, but peremptorily ordered the bishop to make amends at the Cross for having had the imprudence to make public a papal bull, without the king's consent. It was only as a rare favour that the offender was allowed to recant by attorney, while the bishop stood by. All the foreign merchants were there, and knights and ladies, and crowds of people. The attorney amused them by an impudence equal to that of his principal. He denied that the bishop had ever uttered a word of what was laid to his charge. "I am astonished," he added, "that you who hear so many sermons here should not better understand what is said to you." All Chepe echoed the jeering shouts of his amused audience.

There was a popular rumour, long believed in, that Richard II. was not dead. One of those most busy in upholding that rumour was Sir John Oldcastle. After Henry V. had brought the body of Richard, with the face exposed, to Westminster, there was much excitement at, and crowding of people to, St. Paul's Cross to hear a "grand cursing" of Sir John as a disloyal scandal-monger. The public indignation was stirred against him by the exhibition of a book of devotion which had belonged to him, and from which had been torn the portraits and names of the saints. At the production of this volume some of the specta-

tors groaned, while others, the Lollards, who laughed at the processions to the Cross, smiled but looked sharply round lest that mark of their lack of sympathy should be observed by hostile eyes. There too the clarions blazoned their delight when, from the steps of the Cross, Henry of Monmouth was proclaimed, not only King of England, but *Regens et Rector* of the French. They were times when men's opinions differed in politics as in religion. Some of the foremost among them fell to fighting even in the churches; but if this involved more than ordinary scandal, the Cross was soon surrounded by an eager crowd, who were well pleased to listen to the excommunication of a couple of gentlemen who had brawled in churches. But princes were assailed at the Cross as freely as gentlemen; and gentlemen were often the assailants. Many were the up-turned faces as the great Earl of Warwick stood on the steps of the Cross and denounced the young heir, Edward, as not being the legitimate son of Henry VI. The hearers shook their heads and knew not what to make of it.

Indeed, the king-maker, in person or by deputy, used the Cross whenever he designed to move the people. When it was his humour to denounce Edward IV. as being merely the Duke of York, and to proclaim Henry VI. as king, with young Prince Edward for his rightful heir, Warwick sent his private chaplain, Dr. Goddard, down to the Cross on the Sunday after Michaelmas day of the year 1470 to



preach to that purpose. An eager and excited multitude thronged around the preacher, and Goddard handled his subject so dexterously, and addressed himself with such especial cunning to scattered soldiers in the crowd, who had been levied in King Edward's interest, that not less than six thousand men who had been recruited in London for that king's service passed over to Warwick's banners. We may fancy the excitement that reigned when the sermon was done, and the hearers separated, shouting for Warwick and Henry, and praising the preacher at whose words they had so easily shifted their allegiance. At another time, in 1483, there was a spectacle at the Cross which touched the hearts of most men. It was when Jane Shore was brought there to commence her penance for having been loved by a handsome king. Holinshed has noted her meek look, her solemn step, her blush as the people silently and sympathizingly gazed at her as she moved on with nothing but a kirtle to cover limbs that had been decked with the glory of a queen. Fair, lovely, and ashamed, she passed through the gazers, who could not but pity her, even if previously they had censured her, without sparing.

In the same year, 1483, there was another gathering at Paul's Cross of an altogether different character. Dr. Shaw, who had been chaplain and confessor to Edward IV., and was brother to the then lord mayor, appeared at the Cross to uphold the pretensions of Richard to the throne, in one of those political ser-

mons which were so frequently addressed to the people from that spot. Shaw preached on the theme that "Bastard plants shall take no deep root." The too zealous priest not only declared the children of Edward IV. illegitimate, on the ground that his marriage with their mother was illegal, as a pre-contract existed between that king and Elizabeth Lucy, but he maintained that Edward IV. and Clarence, the elder brothers of Richard, were also illegitimate, but that Richard's likeness to his father and namesake, the Duke of York, was warrant for his being of the true stock. There is a tradition that at this part of the sermon Richard was to have entered the little room behind the preacher, so that all the people in front might see him full-faced, and compare him, if they could, with what their memories retained of his father's features; but that he failed to appear. Such a dramatic trick was beneath the acting of such a man as Richard, who, according to other accounts, was present throughout the discourse. If this be true, he must have sat by while his mother's good fame was demolished for her unworthy son's advantage. Shaw could not have taken a more unpopular course. The people loved that Cicely, granddaughter of John of Gaunt, and daughter of Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmoreland. They might call her "proud Ciss;" but they also fondly named her "the Rose of Raby." Trussell says—"Though the Protector, accompanied with the Duke of Buckingham and an extraordinary

train, came to the sermon-place while his commendations were by the preacher set out beyond the allowance of truth, whereof he had made ample declaration before; and now again, after the two dukes were seated, did inculcate the same passage of the Protector's praiseworthy graces and many merits. Yet neither the declaration nor repetition could prevail so far as to win belief in the auditory of what was urged or delivered; which, though in no way it discouraged the Protector, yet it so dejected the doctor, that, the sermon ended, he, as ashamed of his lesson, disconsolately departed, and never after there was publicly seen." Shaw, no doubt, saw that his failure to move the congregation to enthusiasm on behalf of Richard would stand in the way of his own preferment, and report says that the disappointed man soon after died.

Among the last illustrations of the old character of ecclesiastical expression at Paul's Cross, one was given by Richard Kidderminster, Abbot of Winchcombe. In the reign of Henry VII., an Act was passed, by which clerks convicted of felony were to be burnt in the hand. The Act did not prevent the lower reverend gentlemen from being felonious, nor did it gratify the straiter-laced. The latter were still more disgusted when, early in the reign of Henry VIII., an Act was passed according death to *all* murderers and robbers. The Church party in the Lords opposed the proposition, but their antagonism was got over, by excepting bishops, priests, and deacons from the opera-

tion of the Act. As far as it went, however, the Act was beneficial, and many murderers and robbers were executed who might otherwise have obtained that "benefit of clergy" which scholars could demand. The nation was gratified, but old Churchmen were displeased. The Abbot of Winchcombe, especially, went down to the Cross, and there protested (according to Burnet), "that the Act was contrary to the law of God, and to the liberties of the Holy Church, and that all who had assented to it had, by so doing, incurred the censures of the Church." But, as Dr. Hook, who has noticed this incident in his life of Archbishop Warham, remarks:—"The Act only so far invaded the liberties of the Church, as to prevent the Church from extending its protection to persons guilty of those" (above-named) "offences, not because they were in holy orders, but because, being able to read, they were *qualified* for ordination."

Meanwhile, might be seen a crowd coming up Cheapside escorting some lucky fellow who was carrying his stake to the Cross. He had been condemned to the flames, but was to be let off after bearing his faggot and listening to a sharp stinging sermon. Among the spectators were the reverend gentlemen at the windows of the old "Shunamite's House," a hostelry where monks, on temporary business in London, used to be lodged, and where the Cross preachers found bed, board, and a modest honorarium. The old house, like the old Cross, belonged to many genera-

tions, and was a sort of Chapter Coffee House, or Clerical Club, according to the exigencies of the time.

In the sixteenth century the Cross was the trysting-place for all who participated in the joys, sorrows, triumphs or humiliations, the passions or the prejudices of the time. One of the earliest ceremonies there was the proclamation of marriage between James IV. of Scotland and Margaret, daughter of Henry VII. (A.D. 1502), when all the city was astir with hilarity and strong ale. One of the last ceremonies of that century was in November, 1595, in honour of the long and prosperous reign of Elizabeth. The old Cross was reformed, in double sense, for the jubilant occasion. All the world was present, looking as newly furbished as the Cross. Citizens in their modest best, cavaliers in their rear, all plume and gallant bravery, looking on from on horseback, and the corporation as fine as bright robes and gold chains could make them. Fletcher, Bishop of London, riveted their attention and stirred their hearts by his sermon in praise, and his eloquent prayer in behalf, of the popular queen. "Which sermon being ended," says Stowe, "upon the Church leads the trumpets sounded, the cornets winded, and the quiristers sung an anthem. On the steeple many lights were burned. The Tower shot off her ordinance, the bells were rung and bonfires were made." Between those two ceremonies, the Cross had seen many changes. The revolutionary surge had swelled and broke at its feet.

Fisher had preached previously from the pulpit there in support of popery, and he read the papal sentence against Luther, while hangmen burnt the Reformer's books, and Wolsey (who had come in gorgeous ceremony) sent his eyes searchingly among the crowd, where many a wagging head and tongue seemed to assert that the age of free inquiry had come, despite all papal sentences. Eight years later, another scene showed how inquiry had made progress. The ungracious Rood of Grace,—that winking, smiling Madonna that had been made by an English soldier (who had been a carpenter) during his captivity in France, and which, going of its own motion to the church at Bexley, in Kent, had brought much wealth to the brethren who there dwelt together,—that ungracious Rood was now brought before the Cross to do penance as it were. Hilsey, Bishop of Rochester, presided at the ceremony. When the idol had been hewn in pieces and tossed into the flames, the men who had quietly wagged their tongues when Fisher cursed Luther, let them loose and shouted as joyfully as men might who had been groping in darkness and were now conscious of the dawn.

Fisher preached fiercely at the Cross against Luther, as did one Standish preach there, ridiculously, against Erasmus's new edition of the New Testament, and the translation "*In principio erat Sermo.*" The lord mayor, corporation, and several courtiers were among the critical listeners. Two of the last, afterwards, took

Standish to task at the palace, where they met at dinner. In presence of the king and queen, they mimicked the preacher's manner, and urged him to point out the heresies of which he had complained at the Cross. "I implore your majesty," cried Standish, appealing to the king, with theatrical voice and gesture, "to succour the spouse of Christ, if none else will come to the rescue!" Altogether this Paul's Cross sermon made more noise than Fisher's against Luther. The latter was preached amid great pomp and ceremony, over which flashed the glare of the flames in which the books were consumed. But that against Erasmus was delivered amid the dissentient smiles and saucy wagging of heads, and with no crackling sound but that of half-suppressed laughter.

In 1521, a procession might be seen winding its way from Blackfriars to the Cross. The principal figure was that of a man named "*Dolwyn alias Dyryk*," bareheaded and barefooted, carrying his faggot. He was taken to the Cathedral to hear service. He then stood before the Cross while he was lengthily preached at, and having confessed, in presence of a sympathizing crowd, that he was the author of a book in which he had said that the shepherds who preach the Word of God should have meat and drink but no money, and that private was preferable to public prayer; and that he was sorry for it, the crowd accompanied his escort thence to Westminster, where the offender finished his penance by

undergoing a reproof there from his spiritual pastors and masters.

Later, the political-religious congregations at the Cross listened coldly to Ridley's sermons which, in obedience to the Privy Council, he preached against Mary Tudor's pretensions to the throne. When the authority of the Council was broken, and Lady Jane Grey's friends, who were so much her enemies, were scattered, Ridley and others, who began to see that however much more loveable Jane was than Mary, the latter was the nearer legal heir to the Crown, the old Paul's Cross preacher repaired to the triumphant queen in her camp at Framlingham, and there sought to make peace with one against whom he had done his best to maintain a war. What Ridley thought of the qualifications of a Cross preacher is to be seen in one of his letters to Parker:—"Sir, I pray you, refuse not to take a day at the Cross. I may have, if I would call without any choice, enow. But in some, alas! I desire more learning, in some a better judgment, in some more virtue and godly conversation, and in some more soberness and discretion. And he in whom all these do meet shall not do well to refuse, in my judgment, to serve God in that place." From this we may guess how various were the performances of preachers at the Cross, the people's own pulpit, platform, stage often of mere spiritual mountebanks. All degrees of men appeared there; but, the ignorant, the undiscerning, men of ill life and discourse, of wild



ideas and appreciativeness, seem to have abounded. Some of them, probably, drew more hearers than the scholars who sometimes challenged without tickling the public ear. The scholars had been reluctant to show forth on that extremely public stage. In 1544, as we gather from Strype's "Life of Parker," the Universities did not care to send up their florid scholars to the Cross; and men did not care to go. The office seemed to have lost in dignity; and the University felt sense and assurance of decay amid the revolutions of the Church, "or because they dislike Bonner the bishop, or by reason of the danger they might incur in these ticklish times."

Bonner himself, arrogant as he had been on this ground, learnt something of the seriousness of the men as well as of the ticklishness of the times, when he opened his mouth oracularly at the Cross, in 1553. He presumed to censure the measures adopted by the Government of Edward VI. The crowd that had awaited the expression of his sentiments soon made themselves unpleasantly felt. At his first indication of blame, there was a murmur that swelled into audible dissent. When he passed to open reproach, the men flung up their caps, in token of their growing exasperation. As he proceeded to bitter denunciations, they stooped to fill their hands with stones, which they flung wildly at the orator; but when his voice only grew to a higher pitch of indignant utterance, several who wore daggers drew them and made a rush towards

the man who was disloyally slandering their young king. Bonner, at this menacing spectacle, suddenly ran out of the pulpit and made his way to the cathedral, where the door through which he had hurried was speedily closed against his furious pursuers.

The dagger became a feature at these political sermon gatherings. When Bonner's chaplain, Bourn, exasperated his audience by the ultramontaniam of his discourse, one from among them hurled his naked dagger with such violence at the preacher, that it stuck quivering in one of the wooden posts by the side of the pulpit. It would have fared ill with Bourn, had not two Protestant ministers, Bradford and Rogers, stood between him and the infuriated people. Mary rendered them still more furious by sending a couple of hundred halberdiers to protect Dr. Watson while that favourite preached unpalatable matter to them from the Cross. Their comments occasionally took a very savage turn. Pendleton was fired at while he was in the full swing of an angry sermon. The ball from the gun whistled by his ear, and scattered stone splinters from the wall which arrested its career. Thenceforward, order was issued that no man should come to the preaching at the Cross with either gun or dagger.

This popular anger had been nursing since Henry's Sunday preachers (the regular Sunday preachers, I suppose, instituted by Dean Colet) were commanded to preach against the papal supremacy. No preacher

was selected who was not likely to obey the command with alacrity. The influence of these preachers at the Cross was further shown when the fiery curate, Sir Stephen, of St. Katherine Cree Church, on one Sunday, in 1552, denounced the May-pole of St. Andrew Undershaft as an idol. That unconscious object of idolatry had not been raised since the riotous "evil May-day" of 1517. It lay dormant along the hooks over the doors in Shaft-alley. The orthodox audience at the Cross had probably forgotten this so-called heathenish shaft; but the words of the preacher excited them to such fury against it that they straightway rushed home,—to dinner! There, having fortified the inner man and not diminished their indignation, they met in the afternoon, proceeded in a body to Shaft-alley, broke the pagan emblem of flowering spring into fragments, and gave each householder a portion of that which had slept for five-and-thirty years on the hooks over the lintels of the doorway. The rest was burnt, and the orthodox iconoclasts, satisfied with their work, went home to their wives and suppers. These assemblies of men were really no small matters. The crowds that gathered to the sermon were such serried crowds, that men of delicate perceptions could not always confront Paul's Cross without finding something that struck the offended sense with double stink. "I, myself," says Latimer, "when I have been there on some mornings to hear the sermons, have felt such an ill-savoured and unwhole-

some savour, that I was the worse for it a great while after; and I think no less but it is the occasion of great sickness and disease."

When Jewel was but a lad, his tutor said, "Paul's Cross will one day ring of that boy." The Cross never rang to bolder sounds than when Jewel preached there in November, 1559, and in March of the following year. It was on those occasions that he enunciated and repeated the famous challenge which no Romanist took up, and at which some of his own party shook their heads as too audacious. It was in that reiterated challenge at the Cross that Jewel said, with regard to certain specified articles, "If any learned man alive were able to prove any . . . by any one clear or plain clause or sentence, either of the Scriptures, or of the old doctors, or of any old General Council, or by any example of the Primitive Church, for the space of six hundred years after Christ," he would "give over and subscribe unto him." When we hear of six thousand persons singing together at the Cross on these occasions, we seem to have assurance too that earnestness was the distinguishing quality of the times. Not that droll contrasts were wanting on some occasions in Mary's reign. For instance, Strype tells us of a man who, one fast-day in Lent, approached the crowd near the Cross, with a couple of ready-dressed pigs, which he had for sale. A doctor of divinity was preaching at the time. He scented the offence of the transgressor, and had him at once arrested. The man, with

one of the pigs on his head, was compelled to stand up and do penance, and doubtless many a joke was circulated round the Cross, at his expense.

This may seem to have degraded the locality ; but its importance was not affected. Nothing can better show the significance of Paul's Cross, its vast importance as between the throne and the people, than the anxiety felt by the State, at a particular crisis, as to the utterances made there. At the accession of Elizabeth, one of the first matters cared for was that the preacher at Paul's Cross should be one who would be careful not to stir any dispute touching the government of the realm. Accordingly, no better choice could be made than that of Dr. Bill, the Queen's chaplain and almoner. For many years, the anniversary of her accession was a national holiday ; and even lay Puritans, who would insult and spit at the clergy in the streets, called that day, "the birth-day of the Gospel." One especial change at the Cross was the new custom of singing psalms. From the moment this was introduced in one church in London, it spread through the rest, and gave life and joy to the religious feeling. Jewel, in 1560, writes, "Sometimes, at Paul's Cross, there will be *six thousand people singing together* at the Cross. This is very grievous to the papists." Pity ! that it should have been !

The Cross was the very head-quarters of popular English-churchism. The audiences or congregations were thoroughly English in sentiment and action, and

looked for the preacher there to be so too. There was always a sermon there on the sovereign's birthday ; and people thronged to the out-o'-door discourse, expecting on that day something more highly spiced than usual—that is, more bold, free, English-like. Donne preached at the Cross on James's birthday, 1617 (Prov. chap. xxii. v. 11), and he was thanked for a *dainty sermon*, and it was all the better liked “for that he did Queen Elizabeth great right, and held himself close to the text, without flattering the time too much.” So writes Chamberlain to Carleton ; and I may add that it was long before regard for the memory of the great Queen suffered diminution in the hearts of the English people.

Political subjects entered largely into the sermons at the Cross. While Donne kept sweet the remembrance of Elizabeth, one Drope, of Magdalen College, spoke with a bitter and not inoffensive sarcasm of James. Drope argued that it was clear that kings might steal like lesser men. They did not go out on the highway, like madcap Harry ; but, according to the preacher, they were thieves nevertheless, since they never paid what they borrowed, and had the power (and practice) of laying unreasonable and undue impositions upon their subjects. This was exactly what James was arbitrarily doing at that very time ; and there is no wonder, therefore, that this sermon was very much called for. But it was the Elizabethans in whom the common folk most rejoiced. On the

inauguration anniversary, in 1623, of James I., there were few of the great ones of the land, but many of the common folk at the preaching at the Cross. A young preacher from Magdalen, one Richardson, delivered the sermon, according to contemporary records, "reasonably well, and the better, because he was not long, nor immoderate in commendation of the time, but gave Queen Elizabeth her due."

In James I.'s reign the *demi-monde* who regretted their sins, or were deserted by their gallants, did penance at Paul's Cross, and had a world of curious people to look at and listen to them. In one month of 1612, two of these nymphs appeared at the Cross. The first Magdalen was the pretty *mignonne* of the rakish Sir Philip Brooker. One would like to know whether, like later Magdalens, who repent in broughams and rich moiré silks, Sir Philip's light-o'-love showed in the neatness of her equipage and the richness of her attire, the consequences of going astray! The other penitent was a more dashing and audacious sample of the hussey class. She had been accustomed to flaunt it in East-cheap and Paul's-walk in rich attire; to hold a passage-at-arms with those that fenced, and to cut their purses from their girdles as they went home after dark. From this last habit the brazen beauty had acquired the name, by which she was publicly known, of Moll Cutpurse. But Mary grew weary of evil ways—at least she said so—and desiring to publicly recant, a Sunday was appointed for her going through

the ceremony at Paul's Cross, and a clergyman was named to receive her, and preach the appropriate discourse. The City was all "agog" on the occasion, for the "parson" was as well known as beaming Moll was herself. He was a certain Radcliffe of Brazenose, who was known about town rather as a reveller than a discreet clergyman. To this double attraction, eager crowds made their way. It was so long a way for Signora Cutpurse, that she grew athirst before she had got over half of it, and she tipped so many quarts of sack on the road, that when she reached the goal, Moll was a fountain of tears—maudlin drunk! This notable penitent did her office nevertheless. She attracted the public attention much more than the preacher, who, confining himself to being decent, only succeeded in being dull. People turned from the sermon to listen to Moll's comment on it; and they who were wont to attend such edifying ceremonies might probably have asserted, without fear of contradiction, that never had such a couple of Magdalens forsworn the devil and all his works, at Paul's Cross, as Sir Philip Brooker's "darling," and this queen of brazen beauty, known alike to apprentices and gallants as handsome Moll Cutpurse!

But there were good and grave men who had to do penance at the Cross, as if they were no better than felons, or were accounted equal with Moll Cutpurse. In 1626 a young knight, Sir Charles Howard—he who was afterwards Earl of Nottingham—fell desperately



in love with the daughter of a Middle Temple barrister, Arabella Smith, only seventeen, and as beautiful as she was young. Now, for an earl's son to marry a counsellor's daughter was to bring disparagement on the former, though many a lord had done worse—at least had married more below their quality. The parents on either side were ignorant of the secret love-making of their precocious children, who longed to get married, and did not know how to compass it. At length the swain told his love-tale to his tutor, and the reverend gentleman, when he looked at both, construed as tenderly of their pretty passion as the friar of that of Romeo and Juliet. They could obtain no licence, they did not dare publish the banns, and the tutor had no public cure or charge. Nevertheless, Love found out the way to bring all three together in one of the City chapels, where the minister celebrated the marriage service, and pronounced them, to their hearts' content, lawful man and wife. The young folk went away in a dream of delight; but a pursuivant touched the priest of Hymen on the shoulder soon after, and carried him subsequently to do penance at the Cross. All the young people who flocked thither doubtless felt sympathy for the minister who was so readily touched by the pleadings of two lovers. They probably did not believe a word of his expressed regret for having (without licence) subjected an heir to an earldom to disparagement; and when the sentence was read aloud, by which he was condemned to a suspen-

sion of three years from his ministerial office, it is hardly too much to imagine that many a young heart felt for him ; and, as he walked from the Cross into Cheapside, wished the three years well over, for the sake of all youthful lovers who might be in trouble !

In the matter of doing penance at Paul's Cross, and other places, there are notable cases of exemption. We have one sample in the person of Sir Ralph Ashton, of Whalley. The knight had been, during the latter years of King James, a man of a terribly gay tendency, for his gayness brought much sorrow to the matrons and damsels of the district wherein he should have set an example of a good life. In Charles I.'s reign the Court of High Commission laid hold of this sinner, who, to avoid all bad consequences, pleaded immunity, on the ground of his having received a " coronation pardon." He could not produce the document, and the lying knight threw himself on the merciful judgment of the Court. The judges condemned this enemy to virtue to do public penance in a white sheet, in his parish church at Whalley, in the nearest market-town, and in the cathedral at Chester ; " but, upon his alleging that he was a gentleman descended of an ancient family, and had a virtuous lady to his wife, and ten children ; and that if he were enforced to perform this penance it would tend to the disparagement of his wife and children, especially divers of the latter standing upon their preferment in marriage, the Court, in consideration thereof, com-

muted his penance into a payment of 300*l.*, by 50*l.* a year, towards the repair of the west end of St. Paul's." Thus, what aggravated his offence worked to the mitigation of his punishment. He was bound in double the amount of the fine to acquit it according to the sentence, and was admonished to come no more into conversation with those he had led astray. With the addition of having to pay 12*l.* costs, this Lancashire gallant thus escaped the greater penalty that was due to his offences.

The repairing of St. Paul's was just then an object of such interest with the Government, that all crews of ships that brought stone into the river for that purpose were made exempt from all impressment. We discover the popular interest in the sacred place in the legacies left by pious Londoners for maintaining the pulpit of the Cross "clean, sweet, and decent." The bequeathers of 12*d.* a year, to be paid weekly to some person who should carry out their views, must have puzzled the arithmetical powers of the vergers who were charged with paying the labourer. A penny every calendar month alone would have solved the difficulty. But the sweetening had to be looked to daily; otherwise, what with weather, birds of the air, canine disrespectfulness, and the audacity of irreligious cockneys, no preacher could have entered the pulpit.

Nearly the last time the pulpit was occupied, Charles I. was present. He was there to return thanks for the birth of that gracious son who was afterwards

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Charles II., and a blazing star showed itself in the heavens by daylight, to let the king know that elysium shared in the general joy. If the star was there at all it had another meaning, for not many years later the Church and the Monarchy were overthrown; kings and bishops—whom we will next consider—were proscribed in England; and Cromwell accused Dr. Alabaster of preaching rank Popery at the Cross, which was forthwith pulled down. On its place an elm was planted, on the site at the north-east corner of the churchyard; and London apprentices (down to very late times) used to drive a nail into it, on the day of days which freed them from indentures.

## SCEPTRE AND CROSIER.

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**I**F antiquity can endow a matter with respectability, then the voluntary system is respectable. Bishops were in primitive times entirely supported by it. The prelate took all the offerings of devotion, and shook the superflux on his curates and deacons. He obtained his office by election, in which the Laity had a potential voice ; but the voice was silenced, that of the Crown subsequently extinguished, and the popes for a time were supreme masters. From the period of Henry VIII., the English Crown has resumed and added to its old privileges. It names the English bishops. A clergyman, however, is not eligible to the office till he is thirty years of age. As Christ did not preach till He was thirty, that age was considered the proper one at which a bishop might be appointed, who, generally speaking, on reaching that dignity, ceases in many respects being a preacher at all.

The fact that if these Lords Spiritual choose to absent themselves bodily from parliament, the Lords Temporal may enact laws without them, would seem to show that they are not indispensable members of a

senatorial peerage. It is commonly said that bishops are Lords of Parliament, but not peers of the realm. Cripps, in his "Practical Treatise on the Laws relating to the Church and the Clergy," confirms this common opinion:—"Bishops, in respect of their persons, are not peers with the nobility; so they are not tried by the House of Peers in cases of alleged crimes, like the Lords Temporal, but they are tried by a jury in the same manner as commoners, as was the case with Archbishop Cranmer and Bishop Fisher." There is, however, some portion of error here. Watson was made Bishop of St. David's by James II., in 1687, on the recommendation of one of Lady Shrewsbury's old lovers—Jermyn, Lord Dover. He is said to have bought the nomination and to have reimbursed himself with interest by selling the benefices in his gift. Other and equally grave offences were laid to his charge. He pleaded his privilege as a peer, but the Lords refused to acknowledge him as one after he had been deprived by sentence of the primate and suffragans. Burnet says that Watson pleaded his privilege when the Court sat to give judgment, but that it was not entertained, as by previously submitting to his ecclesiastical judges without challenge, he could not make use of a plea at last which he had waived at first.

The Bishops of Durham were earls as well as bishops from the time of Pudsey (1153) to the death of Van Mildert (1836). This count-palatineship was

originally purchased by Pudsey of Richard II. ; but it conferred no peerage. Something like an assertion of membership with the latter seems, however, to have been made by a superior ecclesiastical dignitary. Pegge, in his "Assemblage of Coins fabricated by authority of the Archbishops of Canterbury," p. 7, speaks of the addition of a ducal coronet to the primate's mitre as "a practice lately introduced." In King Stephen's time, however, it is clear that bishops were not considered as worthy of the state of barons. A royal decree prohibited their being in possession of castles or fortresses, such being a practice contrary to the canons of the Church.

Under the Saxon kings, the prelates sat in the Wittenagemote ; but as time went on, their position grew a little uncertain. They ranked with equivocal people, and gave licences for other vocations than that of preaching. Even as early as Canute, there seems to have been much confusion in matters of precedence. At the time indicated, that grim official, the Carnifex, was so highly accounted of, that he ranked with the Archbishop of York, the highest Earl, and the Lord Steward. Confusion similar to the above, which is recorded in Florence of Worcester, continued to a very late period. In the Tudor days, the episcopal powers of licence were curiously distributed. Players, surgeons, and Court Chaplains were put on a level, and bishops had the privilege of licensing all three. They also had the right of licensing midwives, and they exer-

cised it as late as the reign of Queen Anne. When women desired to exercise the office, they went to their diocesan armed with a voucher, not of efficiency, but of respectability, from the parish clergyman, and thereupon the bishop's licence was granted, followed by the payment of a small fee. In earlier days the midwives began their office under oath, to execute it honourably. The clergy themselves were once "medical advisers." They did not act as "sage-women," but they often possessed the "eagle stone," which they let out for the solace of ladies in peril, or in fear of it: and when they confined themselves to their own peculiar vocation, the episcopal licence to midwives remained a relic and memorial of the bygone period.

We must go far back from this date, and far away from its familiar incidents, for samples of how the Crown stood with the Mitre, the Sceptre with the Crosier. All prelates were not essentially tyrants over princes; and there were not wanting monarchs who could stoop to jest with bishops. One of the earliest records of intercourse between a monarch and a prelate has an agreeable aspect. The stern Novatians held that repenting of sin would hardly obliterate the offence. The Emperor Constantine was once conversing with the Novatian bishop, Acesius, on the tenets of that rigid sect, and he found them so narrow and so little calculated to help to a wide salvation, that he said, jestingly, to the bishop, "Acesius, you had better take a ladder and get up to heaven by yourself."



The joke was so successful that it has never been forgotten. It manifested more charity than was shown when Cæcilianus was seeking to be consecrated Bishop of Carthage. "Only let him come here," said Purpurius to the brethren of the Council, "to receive our imposition of hands, and we will break his head by way of penance."

The early prelates, it may be further observed, were philosophers as well as bishops. The first congress of ecclesiastical *savants* that ever met to deal with this subject, was composed of prelates who met at Jerusalem, at the beginning of the third century, by order of Pope Victor. Their first object was to settle the exact day on which the earth sprang from chaos, in order, they said, that something salutary might be ordained respecting the observation of Easter. The process by which they arrived at the desired conclusion is told at considerable length by Bede, and the conclusion was this:—The world was made on Sunday, in the spring time, at the equinox, on the eighth of the Kalends of April, when the moon was at the full! The course of the argument which sustained this very definite conclusion was this:—God rested on the seventh day, which was the Sabbath, or Saturday, after making the world in six days. He must therefore have begun on the first, which was Sunday; then, as the earth brought forth grass and herb yielding seed and trees yielding fruit, the not very logical conclusion was, that the world started on its career in

fair spring time. As God divided the light and the darkness, the day and night which He had created, into equal parts, there scarcely required further proof to show that this must have been the equinox—in other words, and for greater accuracy, the eighth of the Kalends of April; and finally, the moon must have been full at the time, seeing that God made the two great luminaries that “they might give light upon the earth, the greater luminary in the beginning of the day, the lesser one in the beginning of the night. It could not have been thus,” said the bishops, “unless the moon were at full.” By this sort of reasoning, the prelates established an error that was long accepted for truth; and probably no vulgar fallacy was ever conceived, fashioned, forged, and beat into shape with such circumstance and ceremony as this which dated the Creation on a Spring Sunday in ~~March~~ when the moon was at the full!

These scientific prelates contrast favourably with one of the most truculent of their brethren that ever vexed Sovereign—namely, one Wymond, who was Bishop of Man and of the Isles. He was one of the buccaneering prelates, and he carried destruction along the Scottish coast to such an extent that King David bought him off with the territory of Furness, including the monastery, in which during his youth he had taken the ecclesiastical vows. The bishop so misbehaved himself here as, at last, to drive the terrified inhabitants to despair, and finally to an act of vengeance. They fell

upon the right reverend ruffian and put his eyes out. The violence does not seem to have been ill taken by the authorities, by whom the blind prelate was shut up in Byland Abbey, Yorkshire, as a place of penance. The bishop's fierce spirit, however, was never subdued, and the monks of Byland were kept in a state of utter confusion by the wild doings of their blind guest. He would roll his sightless orbs against the light, and exclaim—"Had I only as small an eye as a sparrow, I would wreak vengeance on all my enemies!" The good men of Byland were heartily glad when they could sing a *De Profundis* over the body of this unedifying personage.

Compared with this ruffian Wymond, the very rudest of the four-and-thirty Archbishops of Canterbury of the Anglo-Saxon period, whose names are on the roll of the five centuries preceding the Conquest, were princes and gentlemen. The most of them were well qualified to teach the wisdom of righteousness to unwise sovereigns. They coined their own money, like kings; and one of the finest fellows on the roll was that Dunstan (sometime of Canterbury) who has been so well abused, but who was perfectly justified when he took the blackguard young King Edwy by the neck and shook him into some sense of what that royal scamp could little understand,—decency.

There is a pleasant little illustration of Sceptre and Crosier in a group which imagination may recal to us. Norman William and Matilda are seated on either

side of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lanfranc. William is a little chafed, and his heavy hand has just come down noisily on the table. Matilda's gentler fingers rest on the prelate's arm, and she looks sweetly at him as she speaks. The purpose of both was to induce Lanfranc to confess that their consanguinity was no bar to the legality of their marriage. The Norman priest came to the interview dead against the compact; but what with viands and wines, the sweet voice of Matilda, and an undertaking that the bride and bridegroom would found a couple of abbeys and endow two couple of hospitals, Lanfranc yielded, and the royal pair were made happy by his submission.

Lanfranc respected Pope Gregory, but only *after* King William. His successor, Anselm, looked on Rufus and himself as two oxen under one yoke, with no privilege to the king but that of drawing in the direction in which Anselm chose to pull. What a picture of the times, the men, and their sentiments we have in the scene of Rufus sick on his couch, feebly offering the crosier of Canterbury to the pretended-reluctant Anselm. The latter thrusts his hands into his pockets, the clergy pull them out; Anselm closes his fingers tightly, the reverend gentlemen force two or three of them open and clasp them round the pastoral symbol. After Anselm felt them there, he grasped the sign of his power with both hands; and in later days he made it crack about the king's ears like a quarterstaff. If Rufus showered a good many oaths

on this prelate during the remainder of his life, it was not without provocation.


Anselm kept Beauclerc beneath his foot even as he had done Rufus, though both resisted. He took the pope to be universal emperor, above all else besides, except Anselm, who would recognise no papal legate within *his* province. In this respect, à Becket resembled Anselm. Thomas of Canterbury placed the Church above the State, denied the applicability of civil law to clerics, and recognised no superior save the pope. But when the pontiff Alexander endeavoured to fix the yoke on à Becket's neck, the primate told him that in the papal household Barabbas was condoned and Christ daily crucified. The coarseness of the man is seen not only in his own filthy and blasphemous expressions, but in the delight which he seemed to derive from goading Henry into furious swearing. These men's lives are full of significant pictures. One, of his humility, shows him riding into Sens before the English and French monarchs. The mob cheered the priest who was "insulting two kings for the honour of God." Of à Becket's loyal bearing there is a sample in his answer to Henry's offer to place all things in the prelate's hands if he would but act loyally: à Becket said that it was the devil tempting Christ over again. Of his seriousness we have a taste in a Christmas-day sermon at Canterbury. He preaches from the words—"On earth peace, good will to all men," and he ended by devoting to hell, for

ever, a venturesome fellow who had dared to dock the tail of his horse !

When King Henry came to the throne, à Becket was not yet Archbishop of Canterbury. That title was then in the keeping of Ralph of Escures (1114-22). He was a divine who could insist on a seemly bearing at church which he did not himself observe. At the coronation of Henry I. and Queen Adelicia, Archbishop Ralph had the right "to fix the crowns," but Ralph was stricken with palsy, and therefore Bishop Roger of Salisbury was appointed to actually *crown* the Sovereigns. Ralph knew nothing of the appointment till he beheld Roger take up the crown to place it on the king's brow, and then the palsied man stretched forth his shaking hands to wrest it from Roger, who was ill-inclined to let it go. In the struggle they held it for a moment together above the royal head ; but rage gave strength to the palsied Ralph, and he got the object for which they were fighting, out of his rival's grasp. Over-haste nearly made shipwreck of the solemnity ; for Ralph's palsied hands overturned the crown from Henry's head as soon as he had placed it there, and it would have gone to the ground but for the interference of officials, who saved the august memorial from being marred by a gloomy omen.

The bishops simply hated Stephen for un-castling them. They defied his successor, Henry, but in a comic sort of way. Thus, when Henry II. directed Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, to

confer a prebend on a courtier whom the king wished to favour, the prelate flatly refused. Henry was said, in the gossip of the castle halls and monasteries of the time, to be the father of Hugh, and people were the more surprised at the alleged son's refusal to gratify his sire. The refusal excited the monarch's wrath, and Hugh was ordered to present himself at Woodstock to give reasons for his conduct. The prelate, obeying the summons, happened to come upon the king and a brilliant party of nobles and ladies festively seated in a circle beneath a woodland shade, not far from the palace. No one vouchsafed to notice the approach of a man who was in disgrace, particularly as Henry himself gave no sign of recognition. Hugh was neither daunted nor in any way flurried. He quietly advanced, pushed himself into a seat on the grass between a couple of earls, who did not budge an inch more than they could help, and he sat looking the vexed king in the face; the latter being opposite to him. The whole party had subsided into silence, and this silence became embarrassing to the king. Henry had cut one of the fingers on his left hand that morning, the bandage of which had come unsewn, and he made use of this incident to escape from the quiet embarrassing gaze of the bishop. In short, he called for a needle and thread, with which he proceeded to steadily stitch together the loosened bandage. The prelate smiled grimly at seeing the Plantagenet king turned tailor. After gazing at him silently for



a time, he said, with a solemn sort of humour, "You look for all the world like your cousins of Falaise." Now the people of Falaise were famous for their tailoring, and Norman "fashionables" were ill-dressed, armour apart, if they were not dressed by a Falaise tailor. This comparison so tickled the Plantagenet fancy, that Henry is said to have fallen back on the grass through the vehemency of his laughter, which shows that he was as easily pleased as he was excited to wrath. But in small domestic matters, as in great political combinations, Henry was a superb actor, and had some design under all his actions. I think Henry intended to flatter the bishop by accepting his remark as a good joke, and so induce him to prefer the courtier to a prebend. If so, the Royal condescension was made in vain; for the prelate conferred the office on a better qualified person.

Some liberties may be taken without sacrifice of dignity; others lower the man who takes unauthorized freedoms. This was the case with the same Hugh at a time when he was at bitter feud with Richard I., of whom the prelate was supposed to be the illegitimate half-brother. While this feud was at its hottest, the king entered the church of Roche d'Andeli, where the bishop was celebrating, or attending at the celebration of, mass. As Richard knelt, Hugh approached him, and then the king affected not to see him. The bishop drew nearer, and he asked Richard to kiss him—the kiss of peace, probably; but the Sovereign



frowned and remained sternly silent. The request was repeated, and the thunder-cloud grew darker and heavier on Richard's brow; but he uttered no word in reply to the episcopal demand. Whereupon Hugh took the king by the shoulders and shook him so continuously, that Richard, for the sake of peace, yielded, and gave the kiss of peace to the man who would allow him none of the latter. The strange part of the matter is, that the king took the matter as a jest, thought the bishop a droll fellow, and was on friendly terms with him ever after!

The Bishop of Lincoln figured again in the reign of the succeeding monarch, King John. At that king's crowning on Ascension Day, John hurried away without receiving the Sacrament. At the religious ceremony which was to have hallowed his investiture as Duke of Normandy, he laughed aloud; for no other reason than that his lawless young associates were also laughing. He was so little master of himself, that when, as part of the rite, a spear was placed in his hand, he was so shaking with laughter that he let the weapon fall. This matter met with sad comment at the time, and it was remembered when John afterwards lost that ducal sovereignty of which the spear was the outward sign. That such a king bore impatiently with long sermons excites little wonder now, though it may have shocked his contemporaries. John did not even care to hide his lack of forbearance. On Easter-day, 1212, Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, was preach-

ing before him, and not sparing bad princes in his allusions to evil men and their ways. The hearers murmured applause, but John sent up to the preacher and bade him make an end. Hugh went on undauntedly, and the king again sent to him with an order to desist. The prelate disregarded the order, even when issued a third time, and that time with the fierce command to terminate his address and celebrate the Sacrament. The king said he had fasted over-long, and wanted to get away to his dinner. The prelate minded only his office, and went on, rousing his other hearers to enthusiasm or melting them to tears; but the wearied and angry king arose and left the church, and while the bishop was administering the Sacrament, the king and his companions were carousing at dinner. Hugh may have preached too long a sermon, but John was not justified by that for his unseemly conduct. When the king and bishop subsequently met, and John was softened, Hugh told him that, if he lived, he would give the king greater and more frequent provocation in this way; on which occasion, the king, I think, had the best of it.

On the Easter Sunday next after the accession of King John, he was at the Church of Fontevraut, where Hugh was officiating. At the proper moment, the King's chamberlain put in John's hand the purse with twelve gold pieces in it, destined to be the royal offering, for the day. The king immediately began to amuse himself with rattling these pieces so loudly

that the congregation were disturbed, one-half being shocked, and the other being amused. Hugh was not a man who had an excessive measure of respect for the great ones of the earth. He had laughed at his putative father, Henry II., and there was much, but not unlaudable, licence in his conduct towards his half-brothers, Richard and John. On this occasion he approached the new king with a look of intense disgust. John, thinking the bishop was about to take the purse before the due hour for collecting the offerings, held it back aloft, and rattled the coins in it louder than ever. Hugh seemed about to clutch at it, but the king cried aloud that he should not have it, and that he, John, preferred retaining the money in his purse to giving it to the prelate for any purpose whatever ! This was a mere bit of bravado, for, when the collection was seriously made, and John offered to kiss the episcopal hand before he poured the gold into the plate, Hugh haughtily bade him deposit the money ; he withdrew his hand from the proffered kiss, and ordered the monarch to leave the church. All these commands were obeyed, but in withdrawing, the king and young courtiers bustled out noisily, and at the dinner that followed, they moistened their comments on what had occurred in the very best of Gascony wine, and a good deal of it.


The Sceptre and the Crosier lay peacefully side by side during at least that part of Henry III.'s reign when he so pleased the prelates by the frequent masses

he attended both in public and in private. It was perhaps the sanctification he thereby obtained which enabled him to visit in safety the shrine of the Virgin St. Frideswide, in Oxford. No King of England had ever yet dared to approach a shrine, in presence of which no wicked monarch could stand without the vengeance of that sanctified maid sweeping him away. Henry went boldly and returned safely; but then he was a man who never took the Sacrament, from bishop or humblest pastor, without kissing the hand that offered it. And when St. Louis once recommended him to hear a few sermons instead of having so many daily sacrifices of the mass, he replied, Nay, that he had rather look upon his friend's face often than hear of him from others, however pleasant the information might be. The bishops did not wonder that such a king could stand before the shrine of the dead maiden at Oxford, unscathed.

In connexion with Henry's friend, St. Louis, it may be added that furious as some of the onslaughts were in England when the crosiers of York and Canterbury struggled for precedence, or when the monastic chiefs waged war with aspiring prelates from whose jurisdiction they were exempted, the rights of abbots against bishops were asserted as spiritedly in France as here. They were not forgotten even on such an occasion as the funeral of the king, St. Louis. At that ceremony, the Abbot of St. Denis ordered the gates of the Church of St. Denis to be closed, as the

procession approached. Being exempt from episcopal jurisdiction he would not allow the Archbishop of Sens and the Bishop of Paris to enter his church in pontifical costume. They were compelled to divest themselves of all external symbols of power, and the dead king had to wait for royal funeral rites till the little question between the abbot and the prelates had been settled in favour of the former. Then, the portals were flung open, and the body of St. Louis was borne across the threshold.

Pretty well all the Crosiers in England were raised against the attempt of the Sceptre, wielded by Henry's son, Edward I., to compel the clergy to furnish him with money contributions. "The pope dislikes the idea," cried the bishop. "Dominus Papa," exclaimed Edward, "may like it or leave it; I will have the money!" And, as this was not forthcoming, his grace issued a decree that wherever a cleric was to be met with, of whatever rank, a layman might lawfully despoil him. It happened, soon after, that a stout Kentish rector mounted on the best horse in the county, was gaily cantering over the downs when he was met by a knight, between whose long legs shuffled a miserable sort of pony. The man of war held up his hand, and the parson reined up his steed to hear what the other had to say. "Good friend," said the knight, "we must change horses!" "If I do," cried the Kentish rector, "may I——" "Nay!" interrupted the cavalier, "the king will have it so.



Jump down, therefore, and say no more about it !” Whereupon, the parson shut his mouth, drew forth his weapon, and laid so lustily on the knight’s shoulders, and so heartily thwacked some louts who waited on him, that he routed his enemies, and joyfully resumed his canter over the sward. The drubbed knight’s case was laid before the king. “ Serve him right ; let him keep what he has got. He is a fool even among fools who attacks a stronger man than himself.” Such was the spirit of the king’s judgment, and thereto prelates, abbots, rectors, and the clergy generally cried hilarious *Amen !*

The crimes of Edward II. are in part forgotten through horror at the manner of his death. As soon as he held his Sceptre, it came down destructively on the Crosier and person of De Langton, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry. All the prelate’s offence was, that when Edward was prince, De Langton remonstrated with him on account of his beastly habits, some other offences, and his extravagance. Never was prelate clapped into viler prison than De Langton was forced to lie in till the king’s fiercely flaming wrath, at last, slowly expired, after urgent yet timid solicitation made in the bishop’s behalf by the great men of the kingdom. It was not a good time for outspoken prelates, but De Langton bided his time ere he exacted vengeance for the consequences of his outspokenness.

If there was some formal respect on the part of princes for prelates, there was no lack of incivility when

opportunity arose for it under Edward III. In 1371, Robert de Stretton, Bishop of Lichfield, was defendant in a civil case before the king's serjeant, John de Mowbray. This grave judge dismissed the bishop from the suit with the laconic command of "Go to the devil!" The serjeant modelled himself on the example set by the Black Prince, who was not so courteous a knight as some men give him credit for. In 1374 the prince reached the climax of his rudeness. He was at Westminster arguing against the temporal power of the pope in England, and had so driven the Archbishop of Canterbury into a corner that the primate (Whittlesey) who had to reply, remained wildly staring and helplessly mute. "Now, you ass!" exclaimed the prince to the archbishop, "do say *something*; we look to you for information." But Whittlesey remained dumb. He could kick, but he could not speak.

How the Church authorities turned and tuned the public voice in Richard II.'s reign is curiously exemplified in the prophecies which were made, for or against him, according to the party to which the prophets belonged. They were as rival newspapers, before such methods of equivocal utterance were known. It is in the very spirit of journalistic partisanship that Archbishop Arundel prompted Lancaster to leap into the king's seat, on the ground that Richard had so un-Englished the army, as to make of the soldiers who had conquered in every part of the

world the scorn and derision of the beggarly Scots and Welsh, and even the vanquished of "the weak and miserable Irish." How cleverly the same spiritual authorities led public opinion, and how ably the Crosier supported the Sceptre of Henry IV., is equally manifest in the fact that the new king was described as elected by the people (whose voices had been formally asked at the coronation); which election was sanctioned by God,—or why had Heaven revealed where that holy ointment had been concealed which the Virgin showed to St. Thomas of Canterbury, and which was to anoint the first king worthy of being honoured by God and man?

So with his son, Henry V., the Sceptre and the Crosier sustained each other; and the hero's piety was praised for his having, after his great triumphs in France, humbly and with only four noblemen to attend him, entered the chapter-house at Westminster, and after meek salutation had sat down to listen attentively to a sermon from Lacy, Bishop of Exeter. Subsequently, in the Wars of the Roses, the churchmen were as active as the warriors. The omens of "blazing stars and stranger apparitions of Henry VI.'s reign were bruited abroad, as "leaders" might now be written to lead followers and mislead dupes. And when the crosiered Archbishop of Canterbury stood by the throne of Edward of York, in Westminster Abbey, and asked the people there if they would have him for king, instead of Henry of Lancaster, they shouted



“*Yea, yea !*” with a heartiness as though they, and not the prelates of Canterbury, London, and Exeter, with the Earl of Warwick, had set up the new sceptre in England. The bearers of the crosier and the sword flattered the deluded cockneys that *they*, and not their mailed and surpliced masters, made and unmade kings.

When Henry of Lancaster, however, was young, his council maintained the authority of the sceptre against even that of the tiara. In 1424 the Pope named the ex-Wycliffite, Flemying (whose heretical tendencies had been stopped by preferring him to the bishopric of Lincoln) to the archbishopric of York. Flemying accepted the nomination of Martin V. with alacrity. The king’s anger, however, was aroused by this recognition of Papal appointment without the consent and determination of the king and his council. Henry V. was the son of English parents, and he felt the above proceeding with particular acuteness. Henry not only compelled Flemying to renounce the archbishopric, but the king also seized the temporalities of Lincoln; and it was not without considerable hesitation that Henry ultimately allowed the prelate to be re-translated by the Pope to his old throne in the cathedral which so proudly overlooks the Fens.

Among the eighty-six thousand persons who perished in the Wars of the Roses, only one Churchman is recorded—a lord prior. The prelates, however, were as active as the soldiers, and they of the conquering party were always present to receive the banners

brought by the victors to be laid on the high altar at St. Paul's. The majority went with Richard III., who was a man to gain the hearts of allies and to keep them. The crosiers of England were conspicuous at his coronation. The bearers saw no usurper in a prince who, with his queen, walked barefooted from Westminster-hall to the abbey, to be crowned. For a couple so pious, a cardinal sang mass; and when Richard and Anne knelt, "after Pax," to receive the sacrament, a rare compliment was paid to the bearers of the sceptres, by the officiating prelates. "They were both howseled," says Trussell, "having but one host divided betwixt them." Richard was especially well served by his bishops. To Cardinal Bouchier, Archbishop of Canterbury, a man of royal descent, he was chiefly indebted for getting possession of the little Duke of York, in whose murder, if murder there were, Bouchier was thus an accessory before the fact. But the Crosier served the Sceptre in very different matters to these. Richard loved Ireland for his princely father's sake. Richard of York had been well treated there, and Richard of Gloucester showed his gratitude by attempting to alter the Irish fashion of dress, dignifying the attempt by employing no less an agent than a bishop to successfully carrying it out. This bishop was despatched in the character of a milliner's assistant to the great Earl of Desmond, and he did his best to persuade the earl of the vulgarity of the ordinary Irish dress, or "array." To look

thoroughly like gentlemen, the Irish lords were told that they could not do better than attire themselves like the English nobles who dwelt between the Tower and Baynard's Castle. What sort of attire this was, the prelate exhibited to their inspection, relying on their approval. The right reverend messenger of fashion selected from the samples Richard had sent by him, some sweet things in gowns, with irresistible doublets, hose that would make all Cheapside turn to gaze at the wearer, and bonnets, saucier than which were not cocked on any head in Christendom. But the question arose as to whether the King of England led the fashion of which these were samples. The episcopal milliner was ready for the emergency. He opened fresh stores, took thence the king's own "livery," exhibited a collar of gold of his own device, and an assortment of hats, kerchiefs, tippets, and shirts which his Majesty had himself worn, or was disposed to wear. The Irish nobles who examined all these aids for gracing or disguising a man were naturally least attracted by the rather scanty English shirt. They had hitherto wrapped their dignity in more copious drapery. No Irish gentleman had ever yet worn a shirt which had in it less than five-and-twenty yards of Irish linen. The prelate would have been puzzled to know what they did with it at all, if he had not remembered that, as hose were not things much affected by the Irish, there was no call for the process of *tucking in*.

While one prelate was thus serving his royal master, another, Morton, then Bishop of Ely, was joining the conspiracy to pull the Sovereign down; and Peter Courtenay, Bishop of Exeter, was at the head of the lords and knights at the marriage of Richmond with Elizabeth, at Rheims, "showing them the way" to do homage to the Earl as King of England. Courtenay was promoted to Winchester (*ob.* 1492), but Morton was advanced to Canterbury and to the Chancellorship. When he died in 1500, his will manifested his gratitude to the family of the king, whose Sceptre had been sustained by the prelate's Crosier. To Henry, the archbishop bequeathed his portforium, to the Queen his best Psalter, to the king's mother, the Countess of Richmond and Derby, a golden image of the Virgin; and to the Lady Margaret, the King's eldest daughter and the archbishop's god-child, a cup of gold and forty pounds sterling.

Whether Henry VII. was satisfied with these promotions or with that of others who had served him as Churchmen, may be a little doubted. "I have in my days promoted many a man unadvisedly," he writes to his mother, when offering to advance her confessor, Fox, to a bishopric; "and I would now make some recompense to promote some good and virtuous man." The king's idea was, that preferring good men might induce the wicked to turn from their ways that they might obtain preferment too. It was just such a low idea of things as was to be expected from

a monarch who murdered the young Earl of Warwick, nearest male heir to the throne of Edward IV., in order to obtain the consent of Spain to the marriage of Katherine of Arragon with Prince Arthur.

Let us pause at the threshold of a reign which inaugurated the Reformation. Sceptre and Crosier have never since figured so conspicuously together. We have, however, in their place the Throne and the Pulpit, or the government and the people. But the preachers dealt boldly with politics and the conduct of kings long before the days of Henry VIII.

## THRONE AND PULPIT.

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ALTHOUGH it has been said that politics as little become the stage as the pulpit, both have largely turned that subject to account; but the pulpit has been more political than the stage; to be so, being more within its legal limits. The preacher could speak with authority; the player could only be figurative or satirical. In every reign the drum-ecclesiastic has given the alarum. The Anglo-Saxon bishops did not spare their kings, and a history of the political pulpit might be made as long as the history of England. Those political echoes were heard in the Anglo-Saxon days, and were very lively under the Normans.

The author of the "*Historia et Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Petri, Gloucestriæ*," records incidents in that pleasant book which tend to show that the death of William Rufus was neither accidental nor unexpected. The Church which Rufus oppressed was aware that there was something in the wind adverse to the Red King, and a whisper went through the monasteries that mishap was likely to befall him. A Gloucester monk declared that, in a dream, he had

seen the Virgin pleading to her son against the foul tyrant of the Church ; and he had heard the promise of vengeance that was vouchsafed by the Lord. As the hour for the promised vengeance drew near, and Rufus scoffed at those who warned him of it, the priests grew bolder. On the very day previous to the slaying of the king, a Scripture expositor, named Fulchered, informed the crowds to whom he preached at Gloucester, that England had been trampled on by the profane, and that the Lord would no longer delay vengeance. "The bow of divine wrath," he said, "is bent against the reprobate, and the swift arrow is taken from the quiver to inflict wounds ;" and the next day, despite fresh warning, Rufus rode forth to shoot the deer, and in the evening he was found stretched stark dead, as was spoken by the prophet. The Church managed to transfer all the odium of the crime to poor Walter Tyrrel, who has been the scapegoat in this matter, and is likely to remain so as long as histories of England continue to be written.

When Church and State were perpetually coming into collision, and the Ultramontaniam of the time sought to subject king and people to the exclusive supremacy of the Church, sermons were often like modern "leading articles," with as much variety of opinion on one prevailing subject. This was especially the case during the troubled reign of the Plantagenet kings.

In the contest for life and power between Edward II.

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and his disloyal wife Isabel, the Church struck in, so to speak, for the latter and her young son, afterwards Edward III. In the course of the violent ebb and flow of the civil war, Isabel and her son resided temporarily at Oxford. Though the former was intent on murder, she was too pious to neglect her religious duties, and too self-possessed not to turn them to her purpose. I may add that she was too clearly playing a triumphant game not to have far-sighted prelates ready to support her. Accordingly, Adam de Orleton, Bishop of Hereford, preached at her request before the university, the queen and young Edward being present at the sermon. There are old chroniclers who say that the bishop took his text from the 2nd of Kings, ch. iv. v. 19: "My head, my head *acheth*!" This quotation is incorrect. Lingard tells us that the words of the text were from Genesis: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. She shall bruise thy head," the said "head" being allusive to the queen's enemies, the Despensers. The horrible fate which ultimately befel the king was darkly but prophetically shadowed forth; and the righteous prelate, with his eyes directed to Prince Edward, coolly informed him that "when the head of a kingdom becometh sick and diseased, it must of necessity be taken off without useless attempts to administer any other remedy." In this way did the princely boy learn from the Church that the murder of his father was good in the eyes of the clergy.



It would require an encyclopædia (in size) to show how governments, sovereigns, men and measures have been preached up or down. Poor Richard of Bordeaux was especially unlucky ; for he was not only preached down, but, when he was down, he was mercilessly assailed by the preachers. At all times, the preachers who attacked the Government naturally excited the greatest commotion ; and it is a curious fact that politics were never so bold, out-spoken, and active in the pulpit as during one part at least of the reign of Henry VIII. The English people, whatever their faults, have always been distinguished for their love of fair play. People and preachers were, with few exceptions, of one accord when Henry repudiated Katherine and married with her servant and his mistress, Anne Boleyn. The matronage of England, as Dr. Hook remarks, was especially excited. The women who saw an honest sister-woman dishonoured, and her place given to a woman who was more fair than honest, would have killed Anne if they could have laid hands upon her. The pulpits rang with denunciations against the marriage. Cromwell stopped the onslaught by closing the pulpits and silencing the preachers. Notwithstanding which, men, and women too, stuck to their opinions, and spoke all the louder for the pulpits being mute.

Nearly all Latimer's sermons, preached a little later, were more or less political. Sometimes they were entirely so. In such case, he did not hint at things, or

foreshadow circumstances, as the old preachers did. He spoke right out, and he occasionally employed some of the slang of the day to give force to his words. Edward VI. wished to have Lady Jane Grey for his heir. Latimer, however, in presence of that royal youth (of whom the Dean of Chichester has made, as some one has well remarked, "a little vicious *gamin*") preached a sermon in the palace at Westminster, in which he said—"The king's grace hath sisters—my Lady Mary and my Lady Elizabeth—which, by succession and course, are inheritors to the crown; who, if they should marry with strangers, what should ensue? God knoweth! But God grant (if they so do, whereby strange religion cometh in) that they never come to coursing, or succeeding." The preacher thus upheld the succession as settled by Henry; but only on condition of having no such plague as a strange king, of a strange land, and of a strange religion, to reign over us.

When Latimer was preaching before young Edward on rascality in high places, and was denouncing the purchasing of offices as leading to the taking of bribes in the execution thereof, the preacher, alluding to the judges, said they were distinguished for avarice, bribe-taking, and perversion of judgment. "There lacks a fourth thing," he cried, "to make up the mess, which, so God help me, if I were judge should be a *Tyburn tippet*! Were it the Judge of the King's Bench, my Lord Chief Judge of England, yea, were it

my Lord Chancellor himself, to Tyburn with him!" They might think it "unseemly," he added, thus to deliver himself, but circumstances required outspokenness.

Although Elizabeth loved truth, she did not love every sort of truth, but it was administered to her, at least once, from the pulpit, and by a man whom she highly regarded, namely, Anthony Rudde, Bishop of St. David's (1594-1615). Rudde took for his text "Oh! teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom;" and, in its application, he boldly told the queen that "age had furrowed her face, and besprinkled her hair with its meal." This was in 1596, when other men told the wrinkled old queen that Cupid sat in her dimples and shot at the hearts of passers-by! And she was wrathful that one of her bishops should allude to her in a less flattering sense!

It is well known that Elizabeth both tuned the pulpits and silenced the preachers who would not sing to her note. But she was never so harshly dealt with by the preachers as her cousin of Scotland was. In the troubled times of Mary Stuart, many of the sermons on the side of the reformers were fiercely political. Those of John Knox are well known by extracts; but there were as rough preachers at that poor guilty woman as he. Gordon, the first Protestant bishop of Galloway—he was not much more than nominally so—said, in a sermon preached in the

Scottish capital—"I would wish you inhabitants of Edinburgh to send for your ministers and cause them to pray for the queen. All sinners ought to be prayed for; if we pray not for sinners, for whom should we pray?—seeing that God came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. St. David (*sic*) was an adulterer, *and so is she!* St. David committed murder in slaying Urias, for his wife, *and so did she!* But what is this to the matter? The more wicked that she be, the more her subjects should pray for her, to bring her to the spirit of repentance; for *Judas was a sinner*, and if he had been prayed for he had not died in despair!" This tender application to the queen reminds one of the precious balsam which, according to the psalmist, only bruised the head on which it was shed.

One sample among many of the boldness of the clergy in James's reign (a boldness which was in strong contrast with the blasphemous servility of other churchmen, who compared James with God, not altogether to his disadvantage) is afforded in the person of Bayly, ex-chaplain to the deceased Prince Henry. Bayly proclaimed from the pulpit of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, that the prince had told him, "not a month before he died, that religion lay a-bleeding; and no marvel, said he, when divers councillors hear mass in the morning, and then go to a court-sermon, and so to the Council, and then tell their wives what passes, and they carry it to their Jesuits and confessors." For

this great daring, Bayly was ordered by the Council to clear himself in the same pulpit on the following Sunday. There was an immense crowd, and Bayly startled them, for he not only reasserted all the perilous matter of his first sermon, but told the congregation all that had passed at the Council-table, and how he had maintained his ground there unmoved. Bayly was followed in sounding the *alarm* of the Church by other preachers, who dwelt with force and feeling on the state of religion, but kept themselves within legal limits. "I perceive it is not good," writes Chamberlain to Carleton, "to meddle with these pulpit hornets, as our doctor was wont to call them." Bayly was, however, silenced.

In James's reign, his amiable queen, Anne, went to church where his vices were assailed, and to the play whenever she knew his follies were to be lashed. With all the blasphemous adulation paid by some prelates to this unclean king, there was much outspokenness on the part of less dignified preachers. And as men grew bolder to say what they thought, and to censure what they saw, the political preachers gave Charles I. infinite trouble. Some were as outspoken as Lowe and the bolder sort; others confined themselves to declaring that the government was about to restore popery. "As Father Latimer saith—Perceive ye nothing?" was a favourite phrase with these preachers when suggesting what they dared not name. They made a prayer of an hour long before the still

longer sermon which they preached, perhaps without licence, and then "huddled up the prayer for the king at the end." For so doing, in York, Hansley was had up before the High Commission. He had made unsavoury comparisons, and had alluded to the small number of his own party in that parish in York, by stating that he could write the names of all those in the parish in which he preached that were in a state of salvation, in the compass of a ring.\*

No sovereign showed less respect for Church of England ministration than Henrietta Maria. In the autumn of her arrival here, she was at Tichfield, Hants, and, on one Sunday, the incumbent of the parish preached in the Great Hall to her Protestant officers. Chamberlain describes the scene in a letter to Carleton. "In the middle of his sermon, the Queen, with her Lord Chamberlain and ladies of honour, came through that congregation, and made such a noise as was admired, insomuch that the preacher was at a stand, and demanded whether he might proceed or no; but they still went on, and they passed through the hall where the sermon was preaching, and went to the court gates, and before the sermon was ended returned the same way back again, with a greater noise and disorder than before."

Nothing more fully illustrates the political spirit of the pulpit than what took place at St. Sepulchre's

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\* "State Papers: Domestic," 1636-7. Edit. Bruce.

so early as 1629. Henrietta Maria was ill-looked upon by the Protestants. It was said, and not without probability, that the Pope had consented to her marriage with Charles in the hope that she might bring him and the kingdom back to subjection to Rome. She was disliked in her Popish, and still more in her missionary character. At the above-named church the Rev. Mr. Bernard was lecturer. In his prayer before the sermon he introduced these words: "Lord, open the eyes of the Queen's Majesty, that she may see Jesus Christ, whom she hath pierced with her infidelity, superstition, and idolatry." It is remarkable that, although that imperious High Commission Court had him before them for this personal attack, they were satisfied with dismissing Mr. Bernard with a caution, on his humble submission.

A trait in the life of Bishop Hacket, when he was rector of St. Andrew's, Holborn, is finely illustrative of the heroic Christianity of his character. He continued to read the Common Prayer in his church when such form was proscribed by the authorities. One of Essex's soldiers entered the church to mark what was going on there. When he found that prohibited prayers were being read, he took a pistol from his belt, walked up to the reading desk, clapped the weapon to Hacket's breast, and swore to shoot him if he did not desist. The rector looked calmly at his assailant: said he should continue to do his duty as a minister, and that *he* might do what he thought became a

soldier. Hacket resumed the reading of prayers, and the Parliament soldier put his pistol in his belt, and offered no further molestation.

The spirit of the Puritan party did not die out when the adverse party triumphed. The events of Charles's reign were made use of by political parsons at a much later period. In the revolutionary period of the last century a liberal clergyman composed a toast for the 30th of January, which is not remarkable for abundant charity. It is printed in the appendix to Hollis's "*Memoirs*" as being "by the Rev. Richard Baron, author and editor of many publications on behalf of civil and religious liberty." It runs in this delightfully social spirit:—

"May all statesmen that would raise the king's prerogative upon the ruins of public liberty, meet the fate of Lord Strafford.

"May all priests that would advance Church power upon the belly of conscience, go to the block like Archbishop Laud.

"And may all kings that would hearken to such statesmen and such priests, have their heads chopt off like Charles I."

This toast was elegantly printed on a small sheet of paper, and circulated among the Republicans of the last century, to promote loyalty, harmony, and Christian charity throughout English society generally. The toast was as atrocious as the sermon which was preached by Lowe on an Advent Sunday at Windsor, from Psalm



lxviii. 7. He was savagely political, and exhorted his hearers to sell their Bibles and buy muskets, with which to fight against the king. Lowe declared that God himself would greatly sin if He were to be on Charles's side ! Lowe was entirely without mercy or delicacy. It was he who stood on the scaffold at Laud's execution, and brutally taunted the archbishop with an "Art thou come at last, Little Will ?" He moreover expressed a hope that he would see all the bishops succeed to the suffering of Laud. The fanatic is said to have dipped his kerchief in Laud's blood, and to have displayed that flag of infamy to a congregation at Uxbridge, whither he had ridden in triumph.

When the king's turn was about to come, and his death was imminent, Hugh Peters stepped in as far as he could betwixt the king and mercy. He preached on the choosing between Christ and Barabbas for delivery from the penalty of dying, and he alluded to the fools who would save Barabbas, in whom the preacher saw a prototype of the king. The Parliamentary soldiers were grouped on the pulpit stairs and on the floor. Pointing to them, Peters called them Saviours, whom the people were bound to protect, while they should deliver the Royal Barabbas to be slain.

The Puritan pulpits resounded daily with the ding of politics. The sound became wearisome. One of the best preachers who ever entered those pulpits gave a good example to his fellows. I mean John Owen. He was commissioned to preach before the Parliament

on the day following the execution of Charles I. Such a crowd of hearers, friends and enemies, had never been so closely packed before. But Owen surprised both. He was so modest, inoffensive, and sagacious, that his friends found no fault with him ; and he gave no opportunity that his enemies could turn against him on any future day.

Charles I. probably offended the bishops as much as any of his Roman Catholic predecessors had done, when, in 1629, he ordered several of them to leave London, where they “lived to the ill example of the inferior clergymen, and the hindrance of God’s service and the king’s.” All the prelates, save those whose attendance at court was necessarily required, were commanded to repair to their dioceses, where they were enjoined to reside in their own episcopal residences, and bidden not to waste the woods belonging to their sees. The order was not universally obeyed, and when it was not, Archbishop Abbot informed Secretary Dorchester of the delinquent. In a letter of 9th December, 1629, from Lambeth, he writes, “The Bishop of Durham” (John Howson) “notwithstanding the king’s letter, hath remained here all last summer ; and while he is in London, most unseemly lieth in an inn.” What would Abbot have said if he had lived in Horace Walpole’s time, and saw (or thought he saw) a couple of prelates supping with very gay and equivocal company in one of the arbours at Vauxhall !

Charles the Second, as well before as after he

ascended the throne, heard strange words, either from the pulpits, or from those who ordinarily occupied them. When he was in Scotland, in 1651, and in hope of obtaining the crown by the help of the Presbyterians, he called at the manse of Stirling, for the purpose of canvassing that stanch Covenanter, Mr. Guthrie (who denounced all who joined the royal army without first "taking the covenant") for his support. As Charles entered the apartment, Mrs. Guthrie rose to offer him a chair; but the somewhat uncourteous minister exclaimed, "Stop, my heart! the king is a young man; he can get a chair for himself." Charles concealed his anger, and did not go further in his purpose; but after he was restored to his inheritance, he hanged Mr. Guthrie.

Guthrie had had, however, a foreshadowing of his fate long before. When sixty thousand Scottish people assembled in the Grey Friars' churchyard at Edinburgh, in February, 1638, to sign the Covenant, (which bound the subscribers, while they stood loyal to the king, to suppress popery and prelacy wherever they were to be met with, and to sustain presbytery alone,) there was among them the then minister of Lauder, James Guthrie. As he entered the city that morning by the West Port, he met the hangman going out. The incident strongly affected Guthrie, and he could not free himself from its depressing influence. When he had put his name to "the fair parchment" on which the Covenant was drawn up, he said,

with solemnity, "I know I shall die for what I have done to-day; but I cannot die in a better cause." Somewhat more than a score of years later he was hanged, near the spot where he had signed the Covenant, as it was spread out, over a grave, for the signatures of the living.

One would expect to find Calamy a fearless preacher to the face of Charles the Second. That famous divine, democratic as he was, was opposed to the execution of Charles the First and to the government of Cromwell. For these reasons the second Charles made him one of his chaplains. He preached fairly in the king's presence, on much being required from those to whom much is given; but it is curious to know that a man who so soon seceded as a Nonconformist, was "very officious with his three reverences to the king,"\* as was expected from all preachers on similar occasions.

In another manner Charles received homage from some of his preachers. King, Bishop of Chichester (1641-69), was remarkable for his "great flattering sermons," in which matters of state were meddled with, in a way more agreeable perhaps to Charles than to many of the other hearers. Other preachers hoped to attract his notice, when they took for their text, after his restoration, such passages as—"Nay, let him take all, since my lord the king is returned."

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\* Pepys, 12th Aug. 1660.

Charles II. had some stern truths told him, often in a farcical way, by Dean Creighton of Wilts. "Roll yourself in dust," was the text, from *Micah*, which he flung at the king, the Duke and Duchess of York, and a full court, in Whitehall chapel, in 1662. The application was that Charles should repent for having forgotten his friends. It had been better, said Creighton, if his cavaliers had not come back with him to England. The king's enemies, who would neither obey the law nor take the oath of allegiance, were better off in Newgate, he said, than a poor royalist, who had suffered for him all his life, was at Whitehall among the king's friends. Creighton, on the other hand, amused Charles by railing at the Presbyterians, and ripping up Hugh Peters, as an "execrable skellum," who preached the City maids into making sacrifice of their bodkins and thimbles. In 1664 he plainly counselled the king, from the pulpit, to "hang up a Presbyter John, a short coat and a long gown interchangeably, in all the courts of England." The preacher, according to Pepys, thought the story of Severus was a pretty one; for he had hanged forty senators in front of the senate-house, of his own will, and then merrily praised his great lenity, promising at the same time to hang no more lawgivers without the consent of the legislature. From this low yet serious comedy, Creighton turned to teach the king and his ladies more solemn things. When they should all be dead, their skulls and bones would be like to those of

the other dead, undistinguishable. Nobody could tell the difference between the skull of Marius or Alexander and that of a common pioneer. “Lay paint thickly on your cheeks,” he cried to the high-toned ladies, “much good may it do you!” In a charnel-house, he reminded them, there was no difference between the faces of Cleopatra, Fair Rosamond, or Jane Shore. The Dean so mingled audacity, fun, and earnestness, that there was no withstanding him. Charles listened, laughed, and turned to his old ways. In 1667 Creighton reminded him, in a sermon, that David’s single sin of adultery was the ruin of a nation. It was a most striking sermon, but the day after, Charles was toying, quarrelling, railing, teasing, and kissing one or other of the beautiful hussies whom Creighton could not preach down. Three years after the Dean’s sermon against adultery, Charles made his bold preacher Bishop of Bath and Wells, a post which he only held a couple of years. He died in 1672.

Occasionally Charles was designedly amused by some of his preachers. Evelyn makes record of Dr. Fell, canon of Christchurch, preaching before the king “a very formal discourse, and *in blank verse*, according to his manner. *However*,” adds Evelyn, significantly, “he is a good man.” I have myself heard a sermon delivered from the pulpit in the style of “*Hiawatha*!” First, it came upon the hearers like the tune of some old measure; some old measure, near forgotten, yet still welcome to the hearers.

Next, from pew to pew there circled signal-smiles of recognition ; lips seemed taking form to utter " Hiawatha ! Hiawatha ! " Then the general ear grew tired of the song of weary sameness ; on the general eye descended influences soporific ; till at last we all were sleeping, each in some especial dream-land !

The congregation at the Palace Chapel, at Whitehall, in Charles II.'s time, was not made up of decorously conducted men or women. Pepys records his presence there on Christmas-day, 1662, when Morley, Bishop of Winchester, preached to King, Court, and the rest of a *poco-curante* audience. The prelate reprehended the " common jollity " of that Court, denounced the gambling and general wickedness, and recommended a decency of joy. His reference to sins reminded the congregation of the sinners ; and Pepys tells us that " it is worth observing how far they are come from taking the reprehensions of a bishop seriously, that they all laughed in the Chapel, when he reflected on their ill actions and courses." They were as gay as if they had all been in the pit of the theatre, under the same roof ! When the sermon was done, the king's four-and-twenty fiddlers accompanied the anthem, and his most religious and gracious Majesty having shaken the laugh from his face, went down to receive the Sacrament.

Pepys makes a pass at the bishop as well as at the King and his merry company. " The prelate," he says, " did much press us to joy in these public days

of joy, and to hospitality : but one that stood by whispered in my ear, that ‘ the bishop do not spend one groat to the poor himself ! ’ ” This whisper, if he lived half a century later, may have founded the Rattling Club, whose members were conspicuous censors at church. His testimony as to Morley\* will remind many a reader of Pope’s lines “ On Charity,” episcopally exemplified :—

“ ‘ God cannot love,’ cries Blount, with tearful eyes,  
‘ The poor he starves ; ’ and piously denies ;  
But the good bishop, with a pious air,  
Admits, and leaves them Providence’s care.”

With regard to Morley, let us be less ready to accept the character given of him by Pepys’s anonymous friend, than that we may obtain from a witness of authority. Morley was Izaak Walton’s “ *good Bishop Morley.* ”

When clergymen subsequently preached before the House of Commons, it was not always the case that the members were present to hear the sermon. Every 30th of January a discourse used to be delivered at St. Margaret’s, and the Legislature was supposed to form the congregation. In 1772 the Rev. Dr. Nowel delivered one of these anniversary orations, and the House, as a matter of course, formally gave him their unanimous thanks. Subsequently, perhaps when the

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\* George Morley was Bishop of Worcester (1660-62), and of Winchester (1662-1684).



sermon was published, it was found to be a violent vindication of Charles I., and a parallel between that sovereign and George III. One of the Townsends took it down to the House, and proposed that it should be burnt by the hands of the common hangman! But "as the House had, according to custom, thanked the parson for his sermon without hearing or reading it, they could not censure it now without exposing themselves to great ridicule." This is Walpole's comment in his "Last Journals." The House, however, did take action upon it. Frederick Montague moved for leave to bring in a bill for the abolition of the observance of the 30th of January altogether. The "service" for that day he described as containing a parallel between Christ and Charles I., and Dr. Nowel's sermon had included in the parallel George III. The clergy were oppressed by having to read such a service, and the House had been insulted by the insolent sermon by Nowel. Charles I. ! why, they might as well be concerned for Richard II. Charles I. a saint ! was the exclamation of Townsend, why, he was not half so good a prince as Henri Quatre, yet no one had thought of canonising *him*. Mourn for the Stuart !—you might as well weep for Judge Jefferies ! Fat Stephen Fox saw no greater harm in the "30th of January" than that it compelled the Speaker to go to church once a year ! Fox opposed the abrogation of the service, out of that respect for the Church which speakers on all sides

professed to entertain ; but as for observing the annual fast, he said, clapping his hands on his fat sides, "Nobody will believe *I* have ever fasted on the 30th of January !" The motion was lost by 195 to 27. These special services have now ceased by recent Act of Parliament.

White Kennet, Bishop of Peterborough from 1718 to 1728, was much mixed up with politics before he was promoted to the bench. He had been a Tory, but he turned over to the Whigs, and openly denounced both Atterbury and Sacheverell. As his political tergiversation was supposed to have obtained for him his first great preferment, the deanery of Peterborough, a good deal was dropped from pulpits concerning turn-coats. Welton, the Tory rector of Whitechapel, was not contented with political philippics against White Kennet, he went much further. He put up, or altered, a picture of the Last Supper in his church, in which the dean figured unmistakably as Judas ! A knowledge of the fact drew large congregations, among whom, of course, the dean's friends abounded ; but friends or foes, all went to look on the counterfeit presentment of the Judas who had from Tory turned Whig. When all London had seen the exhibition of the portrait, yet did not seem weary, the Bishop of London ordered the picture to be removed, and there was no further opportunity for assailing Kennet except for his funeral sermon of the Duke of Devonshire, the lover of Miss Campion, the vocalist,

and the notorious horse-gambler at Newmarket. The dean treated his grace's sins with such gingerly tenderness, as if he believed dukes might canter into Paradise through the eye of a needle with the utmost facility.

The French pulpits were bolder with their kings than Kennet with our dukes. The Abbé de Beauvais, preaching on the eve of Good Friday before Louis XV., who had just reached the climax of his infamy by establishing the Parc aux Cerfs, thus struck at the king in an allusion to Solomon. "Solomon," he said, "satiated with lust, weary with having exhausted, in order to excite his flagging senses, every species of pleasure that surrounds the throne, ended by seeking a new sort in the vile remains of the public corruption." Louis XV. dreaded nothing so much as that hell which he seemed by his vices to court; and accordingly, to win a friend in the abbé and secure his prayers, the king refrained from sending him to the Bastille, and nominated him to a bishopric.

In the last century, in England, Atterbury, who was so ready, when Queen Anne died, to go into the street in his lawn sleeves and proclaim the Pretender, would not allow of any political action in the churches of his diocese of Rochester adverse to his own way of thinking. Thus, when the outbreak in 1715 was imminent, Dutch troops were brought over to this country, with the duty assigned to them, if not of fighting in its defence, of guarding places in the ab-


sence of native soldiers in the field. A body of these Hollanders were stationed at Gravesend. The incumbent not only spoke well of them from the pulpit, but lent them his church, wherein they might follow their own form of divine service. For this act of charity the Jacobite prelate suspended the incumbent, who was, however, subsequently reinstated, and bore with patience the sufferings of the Whig bishop in his weary exile.

The pulpits of the last century were pleasantly agitated by the coming hither of Prince Eugene. Preachers found the hero foreshadowed in the Scriptures; but no one so positively identified him as Whiston. When the latter published the sermons which developed themselves into the "Essay on Revelations," Whiston dedicated the book in grandiose style to the prince, whom he recognised as the coming man foretold by the Apocalypse as the destroyer of the Turkish empire. The hero laughed, sent the princely fee of fifteen guineas for the complimentary dedication, and assured the reverend gentleman that he had not had the slightest idea, before, that he was known to St. John the Evangelist!

Whiston, in and out of the pulpit, never ceased to urge upon statesmen that, in politics as in other matters, honesty was the best policy. He was once urging this in a little society at which Sir Robert Walpole, Craggs, and some others were present. Craggs remarked that such a policy might suit a

secretary of state for a fortnight, perhaps, but he would certainly have to change it in a month. "Why," said Whiston, "did you ever try which was best?" It may be that from Whiston's question we get Archbishop Whately's judgment that "the saying of 'Honesty is the best policy' must have come from a man who had tried the other way."

We are accustomed to think Sacheverell the boldest political preacher of the last century, because he was so loud in his denunciation of the Whigs. By supporting the theory of non-resistance and the divine right of kings, he declared little less than that Queen Anne inherited a throne which William had usurped. But Sacheverell had little idea of the noise he was about to make. His sermon made a clerical agitator of him for a little day; but he was really a poor, timid creature. A ventriloquist once pretty well frightened this Boanerges to death by imitating two voices in the room where Sacheverell was sitting. Bishop Watson, much later in the same century, may be said to have answered Sacheverell's opinions, as he subsequently refuted those of Tom Paine. He displayed his political opinions in the pulpit at a very early period of his career. And when he preached before the University a sermon, which was afterwards published under the title of "*The Principles of the Revolution vindicated*," he excited a degree of public attention such as had not been stirred up by any political discourse from the pulpit since Sacheverell's time.



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The public attention is not challenged now as it was of old by words flung from the pulpit at the throne. Yet a clergyman can imitate some of the rough old echoes. Dr. Hook has done this in his "Life of Archbishop Warham." "The clergy," he says, "may become republican from seeing how the Church thrives in republican America. . . . Not once, on any occasion, has Queen Victoria evinced a regard for the public services of the Church." One might try to fancy what effect this remark would have on the Queen's countenance ; but it is so long since the public beheld it, that it is almost forgotten by those to whom it used to be most welcome.

From *her* hands comes the *congé d'élire* by which bishops are made ; and from *theirs* those curates and priests of whose ordaining a word or two may now be said.

## ORDINATION.

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**W**HETHER the Britons before the time of Pope Gregory the Second, (715–31,) did or did not conform themselves in their ordinations to the Church of Rome, is yet an undecided question. In the case of Kyndeyrn Mungho, the St. Kentigern whom the Glasgow people still honour as St. Mungo, it would seem as if they did not conform, but that the saint subsequently thought his ordination was, consequently, defective.

Qualification for the office was then, simply, holiness of life. In other respects probably it was not measured by a higher standard than it was about the time of the Conquest. At that period men were thought qualified for exercising the clerical function if they could read the Church service. One who understood grammar was held to be a prodigy. Collier, who states these facts in his "Ecclesiastical History," argues that the service was in the vernacular; while other writers think his argument has no ground to stand upon.

The young gentleman who complained of having failed at an examination, where he had not been ques-

tioned in ancient or modern history, but "ever so long before either—time o' William the Conqueror," may take heart: greater men than he have failed. It may encourage unsuccessful aspirants, if they learn that the only Englishman who ever became Pope of Rome was thoroughly "plucked" at his first attempt to obtain footing in the Church. His name was Nicholas Breakspear. He was a native of Langley, Herts. His father was a monk of St. Albans, into the monastery of which place father and son were equally desirous of his entering. The usual application was made to the abbot, Robert, who wisely remarked, "We must first see what stuff the lad is made of. He must go through an examination." Now, at this time, Nicholas was a handsome, rollicking young fellow, with little of the knowledge (or care for acquiring it) that goes to the making of a clerical gentleman—"In arte clericali satis supinus," says Walsingham, and therefore did Nicholas naturally come to grief. He failed on examination, and the abbot said to him, civilly enough, "You must have patience, my son, and go to school again, that you may have better luck next time." Nicholas was ashamed, showing thereby that he was not a fool. He determined to become a scholar to insure success, and manifested therein that he was of the stuff of which all superior fellows are made. He set off for Paris, entered the university there, and in a short time outstripped all his competitors. He received canonical



ordination in the church of St. Rufus, near Avignon, and from that period his career was the most rapid in preferment ever known. He was thrice in Rome, engaged in important negotiations, nominated cardinal, and elected pope, under the name and style of Adrian the Fourth, before the expiration of the year 1154!

And when the news of that election reached England there was a general commotion of delight, especially among the ladies. The nuns of Markyate were especially enthusiastic; and when Abbot Robert and his selected monks set out for Rome, to congratulate the new pontiff, they carried with them, among other presents, a triple mitre and a wonderfully-worked pair of sandals ("sandalia operis mirifici") from those nuns, to be presented to Adrian, in the name of their prioress, Christiana. Adrian affected, with some joking of a very mild quality, to be unworthy of such gifts. "He really could not accept them," he said, "he, who had been rejected by the very abbot who now brought this homage to him, and who had thought him not qualified to enter the monastery of St. Albans, even in the meanest capacity." "We positively were unable to accept you," replied the abbot; "it was not our doing, but God's will, who reserved your holiness for a more exalted vocation." Thereupon the pope fell a joking again, and then invited his old friends from St. Albans to supper, at which the pontiff wore the splendid pair of sandals that had been worked for him by the Prioress Christiana and her

exultant ladies, the nuns of Markyate. Thus, very summary "plucking" may not go to prove that the victim thereof shall never rise to be pope, or Archbishop of Canterbury, as the case may be ; and the victims thereof may take courage accordingly.

A good deal of what is said about persons taking orders in the old times who were unable to read English can be accounted for without disparagement to the individuals. In 1354 the ecclesiastical organization of England had so far improved, that no persons who could not converse in English were eligible for orders or were admitted to preferment in the Church of England. (In the last case cardinals were excepted.) This was a sweeping exclusion of foreigners ; and the regulation was thenceforth observed, however distasteful it might be, and was, occasionally, to the pope.

Nevertheless, as time advanced, the standard of qualification did not accompany it. Conjecture vainly strives to imagine the training for orders which some men must have had who obtained admission to the Church, and who came within the personal knowledge of Wyclif. That reformer declared that he knew many curates so ill qualified for their office that they neither knew the Ten Commandments, nor read their Psalter, nor, if they had read it, could have understood a verse of it. This implies that these persons received orders without having any knowledge of Latin. If this was bad in the Lancaster period, there was something worse under Tudor. Young men who could

hardly read English seem to have had orders readily conferred on them !

When Edmund Gibson was yet domestic chaplain to Tenison, Archbishop of Canterbury (1696),\* he found a catalogue of the clergy in the archdeaconry of Middlesex, in 1563, with an account of each man's learning and abilities. "Observing," he writes to Pepys, from Lambeth, "the strangeness of the characters, I ran over the whole, and, as I went along, branched them under different heads, whereby their several abilities in learning are there expressed." Gibson thought Pepys would be pleased with the fancy, and drew up for him (and for *us*), "this short view of the learning of those times." The number of clergymen in the archdeaconry amounted to 116, and their powers in the early portion of Elizabeth's reign are thus defined :—

Learned in Latin and Greek, 3 ; generally learned, 12 ; moderately learned, 2 ; learned in Latin, 9 ; moderately learned in Latin, 31 ; with a smattering of Latin, 42 ; altogether ignorant of Latin, 13 ; ignorant generally, 4. "If the London clergy," Gibson asks, "were thus ignorant, what must we imagine the country divines were?"

Fuller does something to answer this question. He says, in his "*Trifle Reconciler*," (by way of illustrating

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\* Gibson became Bishop of Lincoln (1715-23), and Bishop of London (1723-48).

the ignorance of the clergy in the Tudor period),—"Sad times," he remarks, "in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth, when, by her Majesty's injunction, the clergy were commanded to read the chapters over, once or twice by themselves, that they might be the better enabled to read them distinctly in the congregation." The fact, however, was that Elizabeth wished to further good reading of the prayers, before other amendments just then necessary. Three or four preachers for one county seemed to her to be ample provision for spiritual wants with respect to sermons. Nay, she cared little for sermons at all, and thought that the reading of the homilies to the people was enough.

But men presented themselves for ordination who were hardly capable of reading them. There had been such lack of competent candidates that bishops had admitted laymen of mechanical trades and occupations,—persons, as Archbishop Parker remarks, "not traded and brought up in learning," and some that were "of base occupations." This class had neither dignity of thought, carriage, expression, or action; and people at large were offended at their receiving orders, especially as many of them were of "light behaviour." Parker urged the bishops of his province to admit no more of this sort, "and only to allow such as, having good testimony of their honest conversation, had been traded and exercised in learning; or at the least had spent their time in the teaching of

children." The Primate's letter to the Bishop of London is said to have had a good effect, but the favourable results do not seem to have been permanent. In the following reign, at least, if mechanics and artificers were not ordained, gentlemen who were, found themselves often about to exercise quite as "base occupations." Nevertheless, rules for ordination were now in force. They required the candidate to be well skilled in Latin, and "not brought up to husbandry or some other mean trade or calling;" and to have "a tithe whence he might maintain himself if by the permission of God he fell into blindness, or some other great bodily infirmity or durable disease."

When ordained, the parson had dirty work to do; even Randolph's pedlar, in "The Shrew," illustrates the times by crying, among other things for sale, "parsonages, vicarages, deaneries, or prebendaries." There is probably not much exaggeration when he says—"The price of one is his lordship's crackt chambermaid; the other is the reserving of his worship's tithes; or you may buy the knight's horse three hundred pounds too dear, who, to make you amends in the bargain, will fairly draw you on to a vicarage. There be many tricks, but the downright way is three years' purchase. Come, bring in your coin. Livings are *majori in pretio* than in the days of Domesday Book. You must give presents for your presentations. There may be several means for your insti-


tutions, but this is the only way to induction that ever I knew."

This was in consequence of the reprehensible conduct of some of the bishops themselves of Elizabeth's time. One of them, Parkhurst of Norwich (1560-75), took a serving-man of his own household, "a mere lay body," as was said at the time, and, without the form of conferring orders on him, made him a prebendary of his cathedral. This was considered a great scandal at the time.

A better time was approaching. When Jeremy Taylor was introduced to the Archbishop of Canterbury, his Grace shook his head at the youthful appearance of the young ecclesiastic, and expressed a fear that his extreme youth must be an obstacle to his being ministerially employed. "If your Grace," said Taylor, "will excuse me this fault, I promise, if I live, to mend it." Isaac Barrow was not less witty than Taylor when he went up for ordination. When the solemn examining chaplain asked him, "Quid est fides?" ("What is faith?") Barrow readily rhymed, in reply, "Quod non vides" ("What you don't see"). "Quid est spes?" ("What is hope?") said the chaplain. "Magna res" ("A great thing") replied Barrow. "Quid est charitas?" ("What is charity?") "Magna raritas" ("A great rarity") answered the candidate. "Here is a youth," said the chaplain, on going to the bishop's room, "who returns rhyming rejoinders in Latin to my moral questions, with, I must needs

add, as much truth as good rhyme. His name is Barrow. He is of Trinity College, Cambridge." The prelate, who knew the quality of the learned son of Charles I.'s linendraper, quietly remarked, "Ask him no more questions. He is better qualified to examine us than we him. He shall have his letters of orders."

Barrow had not prepared himself like the celebrated Puritan minister, John Owen, one of the gravest of men, who in his earnestness to qualify himself for ordination manifested excellent sense in all his arrangements save one. In allowing himself only four hours' sleep he was unwise; but in not devoting all the remaining twenty to continuous study he was wise enough. The most of them were so employed; but grave young Owen loved athletic sports. He was a good leaper. He could throw a ball with the expertest arm in Oxfordshire; he could ring those fatiguing triple-bobmajors as though he had been born amid the mysteries of campanology; and when the hour and weather commanded it, then might young Owen be seen painfully taking lessons on the flute from Wilson, music-master to Charles I., blowing persistently on, till, as was said of James Montgomery, he had like to have blown his own brains out. But Owen kept his brains in healthy action, and stirred them to some purpose, as he showed when, as ex-chaplain to the royalist Lord Lovelace, he sat down to write his fierce onslaught against Laud and Arminianism, and earned thereby the Essex living of



Fordham. Owen was presented thereto by the "Committee for purging the Church," which body had just ejected from Fordham its "scandalous" minister.

Barrow, Taylor, and Owen were accomplished scholars when they asked that hands should be laid on them to commission them for their work. A knowledge of English, however, was little cared for generally, and Eachard strongly protested against the system of education in his day as one ill-calculated to make scholars and clergymen. With as much energy as was exercised by Milton in like case, did he denounce the cruel uselessness of keeping lads till sixteen or seventeen in pure slavery to a few Latin and Greek words. The schools scattered over the country failed altogether in their purpose; and he states that he himself was received into the university not by examination, but on the "recommendations of some lamentable and pitiful construing master."

When there, the "poor scholar" had but an indifferent time of it. Eachard is justly indignant at a double wrong practised in his day. "Inferior people's children" were invited, and under specious promises, to enter the university, but when there they found themselves servants instead of students. They were "sizars," whose brains were kept from being overheated, by bed-making, chamber sweeping, water fetching, and buying eggs and butter for their superiors. Eachard says it were ten times better, both for such a lad and the Church, had he been bred to be a corn-



cutter, tooth-drawer, shoemaker, or cobbler. A desire for some higher condition, however, was natural and praiseworthy, but the cost was in the way of those who would not have their sons "serve" for such philosophy as they might acquire in return. In William III.'s reign the lowest annual sum at which a man could maintain his son at the university was 200*l.*, which, taking money value into reckoning, is a higher minimum sum than that required now.

However meritorious the officials, men seemed to have a sort of contempt for the office. This feeling grew; and a gentleman ordained in the middle of last century must have been occasionally startled by finding that he had hardly taken up a gentlemanlike calling. He was advertised for, as people advertise for menial servants, and had to meet agents who were the least qualified for such agency. This may be illustrated by an advertisement in the *World*, A.D. 1756:—

"Wanted, a curate at Beccles, in Suffolk. Inquire further of Mr. Strutt, Cambridge and Yarmouth carrier, who inns at the Crown, corner of Jesus-lane, Cambridge.

"N.B.—To be spoke with from Friday noon to Saturday morning, nine o'clock."

When Sherlock, who between the years 1728 and 1761 was Bishop successively of Bangor, Salisbury, and London, went up for ordination, he travelled

by the stage, in which a turbot was also being conveyed for the bishop's table. The young but tardy candidate received a severe reprimand with his orders, and an invitation to dine early with the prelate who had laid hands on him. The dinner was a little delayed. The fish, as the bishop remarked, had arrived late, like Mr. Sherlock. "My lord," said the young man, "we both arrived soon enough to get into hot water." I think it was at the same dinner that a deacon, who had reached that dignity in the morning, not without difficulty, was rather tartly asked by the prelate if he knew what "benefice" was derived from. "My lord," said the second young fellow, who was no fool after all, "I fancy the best of them come from bishops."

During a long course of years due preparation for the sacred office was not insisted on; thence came contempt for the inefficient; but the efficient did not escape sharing in this feeling. Irish orders, in the last century, were even more easily obtained than English. This may be exemplified by the case of the unfortunate man who may be called "Captain the Rev. Mr. Hackman." He was a handsome fellow, whose relations were well-to-do tradesmen. Like many an aspiring fool possessing such kinsmen, Hackman procured a commission in the army. He was with a detachment of the 66th at Huntingdon, when he fell in love with Miss Ray, mistress of Lord Sandwich, at whose house at Hinchinbrook the young officer met the lady, who was as old and as well pro-

vided with children as Petrarch's Laura. She was about five-and-thirty, and was the mother of half-a-dozen sons and daughters. Hackman, deeply enamoured, made the ex-milliner of the Strand Bazaar honest offer of marriage. To this the pretty, pert thing replied that she had no care to carry a knapsack! Hinchinbrook had more charms for her than a marching-regiment. Forthwith, Hackman parted from his commission, crossed to Ireland, and got ordained! There seems to have been no more difficulty about it than there would have been in his getting a set of bog-oak ornaments. With his new commission he returned to England, simple enough to believe that the woman who had not been taken by his red coat might be captured by his black! Year after year Hackman humbled himself by repeated offers of marriage to the minister's mistress, even till she was five-and-forty, and was the mother of nine children, the eldest of whom was a son fifteen years old. "The cassock" was to Miss Ray even less tempting than "the gorget," and Hackman, driven mad by her contempt, resolved to destroy her and himself. He found his opportunity when he discovered that she was to be at Covent Garden on the 7th of April, 1779. During the play he sat quietly at the Bedford, sipping nothing stronger than capillaire, and then going out, he waited for her, shot her dead, and made an ineffectual attempt to shoot himself. He was soon after executed, not without the sympathy of sentimental persons.

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The lady was a worthless lady ; but that was no justification of Hackman. At first it was reported that the reverend assassin was her husband. On which Walpole remarked—and his remark illustrates the then law of preferment—that if so, Hackman had shown such patience that he must have been a fool not to have compounded for a deanery.

In England we were nearly as lax as in Ireland. Drummond, Archbishop of York, was very easy with his candidates for ordination, if a story told in 1780, by an offensively foppish clergyman to Boswell, may be relied on. The latter (Mr. Nichols) was asked by the prelate what books he had read on divinity. "Why, truly, my lord," said he, "I must tell you frankly, none at all ; though I have read other books enough." "Very well," said the archbishop ; "I will give you a letter to one who will examine you properly." It appears that this clergyman asked the candidate to write a theme on the Necessity of a Mediator, and that Nichols replied, he did not well know what the examiner meant : "that he wrote some strange stuff as fast as he would do a card to a lady, and that he had never read the Greek New Testament." Boswell, in a letter to Temple, says that if the archbishop was so unfaithful to his awful trust, it was dishonourable of Nichols to tell of it. He believed that the clerical fop, who had then the cure of souls, had grossly exaggerated the whole story. In telling untruths Nichols did not resemble the clergy-

man who told Macklin that a man had called him a liar, to which he had remarked—"A lie, sir, is one of the things I dare not commit." "Ah, doctor," exclaimed Macklin, "why did you give the fellow so mean an opinion of your courage?"

Among illustrations of how ordination has been obtained in later years, there is one which is to the following effect:—A young member of the Stanhope family, in the first quarter of the present century, wished to be ordained. Suspecting that he was not up to the moderate standard of the time, he sought help from the Duke of York, a friend of his family. The duke was also Bishop of Osnaburgh, and so might write as he did to an easy fellow-bishop, the Bishop of Cork. The note was in these terms—"DEAR CORK, — Ordain Stanhope. — Yours, YORK." The reply, in due time, is stated to have been—"DEAR YORK,—Stanhope's ordained.—Yours, CORK." But this story is a little apocryphal. "Cork" may have written in the above style to "Osnaburgh," a fellow prelate; but he was not likely to have thus addressed a prince of the blood royal.

It does not follow that a man not qualified for ordination is ill-qualified in other respects. I may illustrate this by an incident which occurred in France. A candidate failed altogether to satisfy his examiners. Their interview broke up in most unpleasant fashion. Not a question asked had been creditably answered. "I wager," said the examining chaplain, as he



descended the stairs, the humbled candidate sorrowfully following him, "I would lay a wager that you don't know how to translate into Latin, "*Je suis un âne*" ("*I am an ass*"). "*Sequor asinum*," said the young fellow, with unruffled meekness, as if he did not know that "*Je suis un âne*," meant "*I am*" as well as "*I follow*" an ass. The examiner turned round at him sharply, then smiled, and, seeing the lad's imperturbable countenance, exclaimed, "Come, you are not such a fool as you look. There is stuff in you. Work on for half a year, and you will pass." The prophecy was fulfilled.

The clerical students who dance their last polka this week because they are to be ordained the next, are generally those whose indiscreet zeal leads them to grapple with men and matters quite beyond their grasp. An illustration of this is to be found in the story of the Irish deacon who, previously to going in the following year to be ordained priest by Bishop Butler, of Lichfield (1836-39), sent to the prelate (as a taste of the deacon's quality) a sermon on the text, "I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God." The bishop said to a friend of Mr. Denison's, who tells the story in the *Life* of his father-in-law, Bishop Lonsdale, of Lichfield, (1843-67), which friend was present when the sermon was opened: "What! all the counsel of God in a year? Put it in the fire!"

Let me add here what Mr. Denison believes of

Bishop Lonsdale, namely, that he was "the first bishop who took in candidates for orders during the days of their examination, instead of letting them go to the inns in the town." Perhaps one of the most singular ideas connected with ordination was that of the Romanist Bishop Doyle. He left a list of families in his diocese, of which he directed that no member should ever be admitted to orders by any of his successors !

Finally, if it costs a gentleman much to qualify himself for ordination, he cannot establish his success without paying for the gratification. The bishop's secretaries exact fees for the necessary documents at the two ordinations. Some irreverend persons might call this *selling* the documents. The scale varies in many dioceses. In Worcester, for instance, a qualified candidate for priest or deacon carries off the attestation of his success at the price of 9*l.* 4*s.* 6*d.* ; at Peterborough he is mulcted in 5*l.* The question is, whether the Worcester man is nearly twice as good as the Peterborough man, as he seems to be valued according to the above scale, or whether the price is a fancy price, having nothing to do with real worth. It is certainly not to be concluded that Peterborough is cheap, and what cheap things are sometimes said to be.

After ordination, the natural sequence is Preferment.

## PREFERMENT.

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IT is perhaps not unreasonable to suppose that the legend "Nolo episcopari" may be traced to the time when Gregory VII. (in the eleventh century) threatened to excommunicate all princes who should confer, and all prelates who should receive, investitures which gave spiritual jurisdiction over dioceses, and which symbolized the old regal right of appointment before the elections fell into the hands of the clergy. The kings of England obstinately asserted their right, and maintained a fierce struggle to support it. Any Churchman whom the king might have been desirous to advance to the prelacy might also, if he was moved by hyper-orthodox and ultramontane tendencies, have naturally answered, however great his ambition, "Nolo episcopari," meaning after the forbidden fashion. But the origin of the legend of "Nolo episcopari" may be traced to a still more remote period, when the people generally took part in the election of prelates, and occasionally called to the office very strangely-qualified persons.

One instance will suffice out of many. In the year

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374, the Arian bishop of Milan, Auxentius of Cappadocia, went to his rest. The Milanese immediately split into two unchristian-like factions, on the choice of a successor. Such unseemly riots and dreadful scenes of violence occurred, that Ambrosius, the governor of the province, a magistrate uninfluenced by mercy, and a man uninfluenced by any principle except a mere profession of Christianity, hurried from his country residence into Milan, entered the cathedral, and harangued the turbulent people on the subject of their duties. Contrasted with what takes place in the present day, even when the laymen and churchmen are confusedly mixed up and yet divided on similar questions, this proceeding has a startling aspect. It is as if a Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland were to rush from the Phoenix Park to St. Patrick's when there was a popular agitation connected with the archiepiscopal province of Dublin. Such interference, however, could not have the consequence which attended that of Ambrosius. Among the orthodox and heterodox disputants whom he was addressing were a few of those intelligent and terrible boys who take part in and enliven most popular assemblies. One of the vivacious lads who listened, or affected to listen, to the provincial governor in the cathedral at Milan, interrupted his harangue by a cry of "Ambrose for bishop!" Other lads took up the cry, and the building rang with shouts of "Bishop Ambrose for ever!" The governor flatly refused the honour thus implied. To

show his unfitness for it, he had no sooner uttered his *Nolo episcopari* than he hastened to his proper magisterial tribunal, and commenced sentencing poor wretches to death and torture, in order to show his peculiar vocation. But the people crowded round the tribunal with exclamations of "We'll take your sin upon ourselves. Bishop Ambrose for ever!" "*Nolo episcopari!*" was the counter-exclamation of the governor, as he forthwith fled from his judgment-seat to his gay country residence. There he led a life as unlike what the life of a bishop should be as can well be conceived. He kept open house and welcomed thither all the *Anonymas* and *pretty horse-breakers* of Northern Italy. This roystering protest was all in vain; the people surrounded the ill-conducted house, and cried louder than ever, "Bishop Ambrose for ever!" "I will not be bishop!" reiterated Ambrose. After which he took horse and fled to Pavia. The enthusiastic people captured and again be-bishoped him; but Ambrose re-asserted his protest, and again escaped to friends who agreed with him as to his unfitness, and kept him carefully concealed. The matter was then carried before the Emperor Valentinian, who was now as resolute in making Ambrose a bishop, in spite of himself, as any of his subjects were. An imperial decree issued from Trèves, in which severe penalties were menaced against all who harboured the modest man who would *not* be a prelate. To save his friends, Ambrose surrendered himself and sacrificed his

convictions. A letter from him to the Emperor did indeed repeat the "Nolo," but Valentinian reasonably professed to be proud of a governor who was thought worthy of being a bishop. Ambrose, quite as reasonably, alluded to one or two disqualifications, such as that he was himself but half a Christian, a mere catechumen, who had never been baptized. It was all in vain. The good man was baptized one week and made bishop the next; and many men might be mentioned who, with better preparation, were much worse prelates. St. Ambrose is one of the glories of our common Christian brotherhood.

In the catalogue of bishops may be found the names of many other persons who have accepted the dignity with reluctance, as well as of some who have voluntarily withdrawn not from the burthens, but the greatness of office. There is only one instance, however, of a bishop having abandoned his see through pure fright. This timid gentleman was Sampson, Bishop of St. David's before the Conquest. The Orkney pirates so admired the possessions of Sampson, that they were for ever visiting him for the sake of carrying off all he possessed for the time being. His life was rendered miserable by these invaders, and Sampson ultimately fled from them and his diocese. He retired to France, and rubbed his hands with delight at having done with St. David's.

In connexion with preferment, I may notice here that the first instance of "translation" in England is

to be found in the see of Hereford, whence, in 1163, Gilbert Foliot was translated to London. Gilbert was of most noble race ; for he was descended from that Rollo the Dane who in 911 wrung Normandy from Charles the Simple.

To another bishop, a quiet abbey bosomed deep in vines had more attraction than his episcopal palace. Godfrey, Bishop of St. Asaph (1160-65), withdrew from that bleak stage of duty to warm and cheerful Abingdon, where he took up the office of abbot. Nothing could induce him to leave that cheerful home, with its club of gentlemen, scholars, and artists, who, as monks, served in the church, gossiped in the cloisters, or plied pen and pencil in the scriptorium. Exemplary patience was exercised towards, and many allowances were made for, a worthy man who loved his ease ; and it was not till 1175 that the see of St. Asaph's was provided with a diocesan who had none of the temptations by which Godfrey had been seduced.

The bishopric of Bangor was refused by Giraldus Cambrensis, in 1190 ; and as a proof that the disinclination to accept the responsibilities of the solemn office has rather increased than otherwise in modern times, it is only necessary to state that at the last vacancies the archbishopric of Canterbury and the sees of Bristol, Gloucester, Rochester, Salisbury, and Worcester were declined by the persons to whom they were first offered.

In the matter of preferment as regards archbishops,

the rule seems to have been uncertain. Popes respected or rejected elections according to their humour at the moment. Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury (1193–1205), was a busy, crafty, but ill-lettered man. One of the great delights of Innocent III. and his court was to listen to Giraldus Cambrensis (Barry), who at the pope's birthday used to give his imitations of the primate, particularly of his ungrammatical speaking of Latin. At a later period (1278), an equally unlettered man, Burnell, Bishop of Bath and Wells, was not allowed to pass to the primacy, on the ground of his being illiterate. He was considered good enough for a prelate but not for a primate. Later again, in 1349, when the chapter elected Bredewardin to the archbishopric, the pope annulled the election of the best scholar of his day. Perhaps the pontiff looked upon him as a sort of a magician, for Bredewardin had the reputation of having squared the circle. The dignity was next offered to De Edindon, Bishop of Winchester (1346–66). That prelate looked out from his castle at Farnham over the rich lands around him; and, in deep thought, over the whole of his fair diocese, and therewith he made up his mind. "Canterbury," said he, "hath the higher rack, but Winchester the better manger."

It is perhaps not altogether foreign to the matter of preferment to remark that Barlow, Bishop of St. David's, and afterwards of Chichester, where he died,

1569, was the first married prelate in England. Further, Anthony Kitchen (or Dunstan) of Llandaff, where he was installed from 1545 to 1565, was the only prelate who consented to take the oath of supremacy. Goldwell, of St. Asaph, was the only English prelate who was to be found, officially, at the Council of Trent. He, it will be remembered, went a voluntary exile to Rome, in 1555. Among the curiosities of episcopal preferment I cite the case of Thirlby, who was, first, bishop of a see that never had any other prelate; secondly, he succeeded to two other bishoprics; and lastly, died without any preferment at all. This personage was Thomas Thirlby. Henry VIII., at the Dissolution, converted the abbey of Westminster, valued at nearly 4000*l.*, into a deanery, and subsequently into a bishopric. The king afterwards appointed Thirlby "Bishop of Westminster" in 1540. In ten years, having wasted all the allotted patrimony, this exemplary personage was translated to Norwich. On the day of the translation, Edward VI. dissolved the first bishopric. In 1554, Queen Mary sent Thirlby from Norwich to Ely, and restored an abbot to Westminster, in place of the dean. At the accession of Elizabeth, that queen turned out Thirlby altogether, ejected the abbot, and established the collegiate church of a dean and twelve prebendaries (or canons), whose successors are now in office at Westminster. The improvident Thirlby survived his deprivation just a dozen years, dying in 1570. To him may be applied the

well-worn illustration, "He went up like a rocket and came down like the stick." He was worse off than Merkes, Bishop of Carlisle, who, in 1399, was deprived of his bishopric, and preferred to the vicarage of Stourminster!

It was a very old custom, that of conferring on lawyers and physicians, bishoprics by way of recompense for services which could not otherwise be rewarded. Those gentlemen were, of course, in orders, and they took up that secular calling which was most likely to lead them to mitred dignities. Wiclif stoutly set his face against clergymen exercising any secular employment. In his time men who had been rewarded with bishoprics were not content therewith. They bribed and intrigued at court in order to get profitable appointments, the revenues of which would enable them to put aside the income they derived from their sees.

With regard to ordinary preferment, Latimer has a curious illustration in the story of a priest who sent a basket of thirty apples to the patron of a vacant benefice, asking him at the same time for his good offices. The patron said it was not a matter of apples, and he had as good fruit in his own orchard. He was, however, induced to taste one, and on putting his teeth to it, out fell ten pieces of gold. "They are all off the same tree," said the priest, and the patron became at once convinced that he was the most fitting man for the post he coveted.

There were many candidates each equally eager to become Bishop of Ely when that see was vacant towards the close of the sixteenth century. The bishopric, however, was kept vacant from 1581 to 1598. Such vacancies were frequent when pensions were paid out of episcopal revenues to royal favourites, or when it was convenient to ministers to draw their own incomes from the episcopal funds, or otherwise appropriate them. Lancelot Andrews, bishop successively of Chichester, Ely, and Winchester (*ob.* 1626), is said to have been long kept out of preferment because he refused to be a party to a transaction which would have diverted a portion of ecclesiastical income from its legitimate purposes.

The irregularities of the new reign which began soon after the above date, are well known. But in Sir Thomas Overbury's "*Crumms fall'n from King James's Table*," there is a sample of that monarch's conduct in church matters which is one of the few things that can be set to his credit. "Being desired by a nobleman to grant a dispensation to one of his majesty's most eminent chaplains to hold two benefices without distance, his majesty denied it, saying, 'I must answer it to God, if the people be not fed by their pastor, and therefore I will never grant a dispensation in that kind.' But the nobleman replied and said that his majesty had done it to other men. 'If I did, God forgive me! He was a knave that misinformed me, and I a fool for not better inquiring.'"



Unqualified applicants for preferment were quite as numerous in the reign of Charles I. When the bishopric of Winchester was vacant, in 1626, by the death of Lancelot Andrews, who had been translated from Ely, a curious bid for the office was made by a Cambridge man. He recommended the Duke of Buckingham to take the office himself. "How can I make myself a bishop?" asked the startled duke. "By appointing *me* to the dignity, and reserving the revenues for yourself," said the applicant. The Cambridge divine would have been content with shearing a little closer the flock generally; but, of course, he was not appointed. Neyle obtained the preferment; and when he went to York in 1632, he was succeeded by Curle, who had obtained his first episcopal preferment, to Rochester, in 1628, when of all the candidates for the office the most singular was one Walter Balcanquall. Before the bishopric was vacant this individual wrote a letter, dated 1627, which is now in the State Paper Office. The writer solicits Conway to "lay to his helping hand for the writer's preferment to the bishopric of Rochester." Balcanquall alludes to his special qualifications, in that "he is more likely to do the Duke of Buckingham service than any new bishop that can be made at that time; that he has much credit among the duke's adversaries, and that his earnestness for the loan in Kent prevailed more than any other man's." Curle, however, Dean of Lichfield, obtained the pleasant preferment.

While some candidates proposed fraud and others offered service, there were not wanting men who employed flattery, and mingled therewith a smack of blasphemy. In 1628 the Rev. Lambert Osbolton wrote to Dudley Carleton, Viscount Dorchester, imploring him to obtain the next prebend for him in Westminster, according to a promise which the king had made, but had forgotten. The viscount is asked to move the duke. Buckingham had previously moved the king to first cast his eye on Osbolton, and if viscount and duke do not interfere in his behalf, "then," says Osbolton, "I shall languish like the man at the pool, as destitute of a good angel to move the waters for me." It may be added of Charles, that the constant forgetfulness of his promises in this way caused his Majesty to be incessantly beset by the patrons of reverend gentlemen who needed such angels to stir the water for them. Smaller men were as much beset as the king. A letter from the Rev. Samuel Collins, A.D. 1628, says that, "if left to himself by those who may command, I will prefer Sir Robert Hatton's son at Cambridge this year."

Quite as questionable men got into deaneries as into bishoprics. Hacket, in his "Life of Williams, Archbishop of York," (1641-50), speaks of a reverend gentleman, named Scot, who was made Dean of York, for no better reason than to enable him to pay a gambling debt! If this sporting divine, Scot, was a bachelor at this time, as is probable, and set an

example that was much followed by his colleagues, we can only wonder at Laud's statement, which gave so much offence—namely, that in disposing of ecclesiastical preferments he would, they being in other things equal, always prefer the single to the married man.

A singular law of preferment connected with York and the dean may be here noticed. When one of the four residentiary canonries in the cathedral happened to be vacant, the appointment, which rested with the dean, was regulated by a singular statute. He was bound to confer the office on the first person he met, but of course such person must be an eligible person. Whether such statute be now in force or not, I cannot say, but it is easy to conjecture what droll circumstances might arise out of it. What a dodging of candidates to encounter the dean—what a counter-dodging of the dean, to avoid certain of the candidates. How the pertinacious expectants would be running the more favoured out of breath; and how the dean's sight would be of longer or shorter powers, according to the object that might be approaching! Or, probably, while the eager farce was going on in one direction, where, at odd corners, would-be canons were already residentiary, silyly awaiting the coming of the nominator, the dean would stroll to the back-gate of his garden, there unexpectedly meet the "coming man" for whom he was looking, appoint him to the dignity, with a "How *very* fortunate"—on both sides,

and a latent idea, perhaps, that it might also be providential !

Soon after Wilkins was created Bishop of Chester (1668-72)—no bad preferment for a friend of Cromwell's—the unfounded report arose that he was about to be transferred to Winchester, and to be made Lord Treasurer. It was "foolish talk," but Wilkins's preferment was accounted for. "I do gather that he is a mighty rising man," said Pepys, "as being a latitudinarian, and the Duke of Buckingham his great friend."

What care Charles II. had for the well-being of the church is illustrated by what he did for one of his chaplains whom he designated as a "very great block-head." The king preferred him to a living in Suffolk; and hearing that he had brought all the people back to the church, Charles could not imagine how the incumbent had done it, or what he had said, but the king supposed that "the parson's nonsense suited the people's nonsense;" and such being the case, Charles raised him to an Irish bishopric. The story, however, is told by Ivimey, a baptist, and must be taken for what the narrator is worth.

Certainly, not all the clerical expectants about Whitehall were blockheads. There was one who was no fool, and who contrived to help himself to preferment by giving a "kiss in the dark." In 1690, died at Tangiers, "Don Carlos," that Charles Earl of Plymouth who was the son of Charles II. and the

beautiful Catherine Peg. He left a widow, Bridget, third daughter of Buckingham's creature, Osborn Viscount Latimer and subsequently Marquis of Carmarthen and Duke of Leeds. The young and childless widow was one evening walking slowly along the gallery at Whitehall, when she suddenly found an arm round her waist and a man's lips on her cheek. I have a strong impression that the gentle assault was not altogether unexpected. At all events there stood the Rev. Philip Bisse at the apparently astonished lady's side. Philip was not at all embarrassed. He merely whispered an impudent sort of apology, to the effect that he had mistaken the dowager-duchess for one of the maids of honour. The young dowager seems to have impressed upon him the impropriety of kissing maids of honour at all, and Bisse certainly did not address himself to such practice. In recompense, the duchess married this Whitehall chaplain, and the audacious kiss in the gallery helped him to the bishoprics of St. David's and Hereford (*ob.* 1721).

William III. in the year 1691 offered the Archbishopric of Canterbury (on the deprivation of Sancroft) to the dean of the cathedral—Tillotson. The latter told the king that to be preferred to an archbishopric would be his ruin. Nevertheless, he would consent to accept it if the king would promise to take care of his widow, should she survive her husband. "An Archbishop of Canterbury's widow," he said, "would seem a strange sort of personage in the eyes

of the people." The king asked, "why?" and Tillotson replied that there had been only two of the Canterbury primates that were married. Cranmer (whose foreign wife so seldom came before the public gaze that many persons looked on her as a myth) and Parker. Tillotson said that the charges of the dignity would exhaust his resources; and if he were to be Lord Primate, the king must promise to provide for his widow. On this understanding, the preferment was accepted. Three years later, when Tillotson died so soon after being taken suddenly ill in the pulpit at Whitehall, William remembered and fulfilled his promise.

Bishop Burnet had some very healthy ideas with regard to preferment. He required due qualification. Once he peremptorily refused to admit to an incumbency in his diocese, a young priest who had been nominated by the Lord Chancellor. Burnet, however, recognised "stuff" in the young fellow; and was willing to give him a chance in a way that probably no prelate would think of now. He sent the candidate for preferment to his studies, but he made him at the same time happy by stating that he would undertake to perform all the duties of the vacant living, till the Lord Chancellor's nominee was duly qualified. Never had youthful aspirant more excellent stimulus; and I hope he did credit to both Chancellor and Bishop, as well as to himself. His persistency was of a better quality than that of the curate, who, on the ground

of (distant) kinsmanship, always called on Herring just before dinner-time. To get rid of him, Herring gave him a living somewhere afar off, and thus relieved himself of a nuisance.

While one man like Bisse may obtain preferment by deliberate audacity of action, or with foresight like Tillotson, another may unexpectedly obtain it by an unpremeditated burst of wit. "I do remember," says a writer in the "Harleian Miscellany," "a nobleman who before a very numerous assembly told a worthy divine who was soliciting him for a living then vacant and in his lordship's disposal, 'No, no, doctor, talk no more of it; but prythee, man, learn to dance.' The doctor, not at all abashed, smilingly replied, 'He should be incorrigible not to improve, with his lordship for an instructor, who had long taught him to *dance attendance*.' 'Have I so, doctor?' says the earl; 'then even take the living; and my daughter Sophy shall teach you to turn your toes out.'" The company laughed; but the doctor had most reason.

Sharp, Archbishop of York (1691-1714), is said to have had sufficient influence with Queen Anne to prevent Swift from being preferred to a bishopric. The Irish dean knew very well how to tease men who had been luckier than himself. Mrs. Pilkington, in her memoirs, notices but does not name, a gentle, polite, but highly ambitious clergyman whose merits as a preacher had won for him a bishopric. "I hope,

my lord," said Swift, "as you are an Irishman, you will now use your eloquence in the House of Peers in support of the interests of your country." "I can't do it, Mr. Dean, as yet; for my bishopric is but small, and I cannot hope for a better if I disoblige the Court." Preferment and elevation were the guerdons of so good a man; and at each ascent Swift renewed his application, with the usual answer, met by a request on the side of the dean, that when his lordship got something better he would become an honest man. The bishop promised, and he ultimately kept his word. On obtaining the archbishopric, he sent for the dean, says the once-famous Lætitia, "and told him, I am now at the top of my preferment, for I well know no Irishman will ever be made English Primate; therefore, as I can rise no higher in fortune or station, I will zealously promote the good of my country." And it is added that he became, and continued, a "most outrageous patriot" till the day of his death.

Political considerations were never more necessary to be taken into account than in the reign of George I., when he and his ministers were at loggerheads. At that time an aspiring churchman did injury to his cause by paying homage at Court. Dr. Lockier, wishing to become Dean of Peterborough, thought one of the means to such an end would be in ceasing to attend the king's evening-parties. For such withdrawal of service the minister bestowed ample reward by



promoting Lockier to the deanery. The king laughed, and whispered to his old friend, at the next *levée*—“Well, Mr. Dean, you wont mind coming to see me of an evening now.” On another occasion, the king’s personal friend Dr. Younger, was suddenly dismissed from his post of Clerk of the Closet, and he retired to his deanery at Salisbury. The king was annoyed at losing the society of a man with whom he used to converse in German, and wished to do him a good turn, but he was told Dr. Younger was dead. The doctor’s royal patron was unfeignedly sorry; but, a few years after, being in Salisbury cathedral, the first person he recognised was Younger. “Why, my little dean,” said the king, “they told me you were dead!” Younger explained the case as it had occurred; and George, understanding that he had lost his Clerk of the Closet only because he had a friendly feeling for him, exclaimed, with irreverent heartiness—“By G—, you shall have the first bishopric that is vacant!” But the dean died before that vacancy occurred.

When Wilson, the subsequently celebrated Bishop of Sodor and Man, was tutor to Lord Strange, he was supposed to have marred his preferment by his own doing. The young lord was about to sign a paper without reading it, and Wilson let fall some burning sealing-wax on his fingers as Lord Strange was on the point of subscribing. The fingers smarted, and the lord blasphemed. “Hush!” said the tutor, “you would have forgotten any advice I might have given

you not to act so foolishly, but you will remember this passing pain whenever you are about to sign a paper again." The tutor's friends thought Wilson had spoiled his career; but in 1698 he was, as he says, "forced into the bishopric" of Sodor and Man by the Earl of Derby. He lived in it with the simplicity of an apostle, and resolutely refused all other preferment. When he appeared at Court in 1735, Queen Caroline said, aloud—"Here is a bishop who does not come for a translation." And Wilson answered that he was indeed married to his bishopric; adding—"I will not leave my wife in my old age because she is poor!"

Other churchmen had other opinions in the reign of George II. There is one case, showing by what means preferment was obtained, which must not be passed over. Willis, who was afterwards Dean of Lincoln, and Bishop of St. David's, and then of Bath and Wells, where he died in 1773, was employed as a "decipherer of letters" in the Post-office—that is, he read such letters that passed through the office as the Government had a curiosity about. He served his employers so well that he earned a salary of 1000*l.* a year, and owed all his preferments to the useful political work he did for it. During a part of the same reign Dr. Gibson, Bishop of London (1723–48), was popularly called "heir-apparent to the see of Canterbury." Unfortunately, he missed the primacy by happening to preach against masquerades, in the pre-

sence of the king, who was very fond of them. Had the bishop gone to one, or had he ever written a play, he would have had a better chance of preferment. He did not know, perhaps, what George II. said to Whiston—"You'd be wiser, Mr. Whiston, if you kept your religious opinions to yourself." "If Martin Luther had done so," replied Whiston, "I should like to know where your Majesty would be now!"

The Rev. Dr. Francis, the father of Sir Philip, wrote a play called "Constantine." He is not so well remembered for this tragedy as for his translations of Horace. The play failed; but this was a wonderful piece of good fortune for the author. The brilliant Mrs. Bellamy smiled on the reverend dramatist. She had played Fulvia to the Constantine of Spranger Barry (1754), and in failing pitied the clerical playwright more than she did herself. She was the "Cynthia of the minute" to Henry Fox, who could refuse her nothing; and, for the dramatic parson, who had been in theatrical slang "damned," she asked preferment. She was the more readily heeded as Francis had written much in favour of the Government. A good scholar, a poor playwright, and a political party-writer, might be but ill qualified for a religious teacher; but he would do, it was thought, for a country rectory. Mrs. Bellamy pledged herself to that fact, and won her client's cause. Lord Holland presented the author of a poor tragedy to the rectory of Barrow, in Suffolk; and the new rector had

reason to congratulate himself that by failing on the stage he had been lifted into a living by the frailest actress of an universally frail period.

Such incidents are not rare in the annals of the French stage and church. Some of the Gallican bishops of the last century execrated the stage, but they adored the actresses. There was De Jarente, Bishop of Orleans, who was of so heavenly a complexion that he loved nothing of earth, except the famous young player Madeleine Guimard. The prelate was only one of a crowd of worshippers ; but he was the most generous. Madeleine had a swarm of young clerical fellows about her—irresistible, rascally abbés, who asked her good offices in the way of preferment. Now the fond prelate held what was called “ *la feuille des bénéfices*,” and he was never reluctant to name to a benefice on that list, when a vacancy occurred, the candidate who had bought the good graces of Madeleine. That she made money thereby was once wittily suggested by Sophie Arnould, in allusion to her sister-player’s thinness. “ *Ce petit ver-à-soie*,” she said, “ *devrait être plus gras. Elle ronge une si bonne feuille !*”

As a contrast with Lord Holland’s carelessness in nominating to a living, may be noticed the eighth Earl of Abercorn’s unselfishness. It deserves honourable mention. He was an eccentric man. When George III. expressed a fear that the hospitality he had shown on one occasion by giving up his house to Queen Charlotte

for a night must have caused him some trouble, the Earl answered that "It had—a great deal of trouble." Again, on Robertson remarking "that the trees and shrubs at his country-house had grown very much since last year," Lord Abercorn sagely observed, "They have nothing else to do." This peer had a brother George, in holy orders, and George importuned him to apply to the ministry for some ecclesiastical preferment. Lord Abercorn promptly refused; but he gave his brother a thousand pounds a year by way of compensation. The "rev. and hon." gentleman contrived, however, to push on in the world. He obtained the rectory of Taplow, and was nominated to a canonry of Windsor; but whether he retained the annuity with such preferment is not known.

Dr. Francis is not the only man who was indebted for advancement in the Church to the Holland family. The late Rev. Sydney Smith owed his first valuable piece of preferment to the persistence of Lady Holland. Erskine was a constant visitor at Holland House. As soon as he was made Lord Chancellor, Lady Holland laid close siege to him to compel him to confer a living on Smith. Erskine at last yielded, and Smith called on him to thank him for the appointment. The Chancellor disavowed all claim to being thanked. "Lady Holland," he said, "insisted on my giving it to you: and if she had desired me to give it to the devil," he added, "*he* must have had it!" There was something of the same spirit in the remark

of George III. when he nominated a man he disliked to a bishopric. The person thus preferred coyly confessed himself unworthy of the preferment. To this the king replied that he knew that well enough, but the Prime Minister *would* have it so, and he (the king) had yielded to the persistency. This mock-modest prelate may have been the bishop of whom Smith said that he looked so like Judas as to induce Smith at last to firmly believe in the apostolical succession! Dr. Francis and Sydney Smith are of course only two of the many men who have owed fortune to the ladies. Boniface of Savoy, who was Archbishop of Canterbury from 1240 to 1270, had that dignity conferred on him simply because he was the queen's cousin.

Dr. Goodenough, who was Bishop of Carlisle from 1808 to 1827, owed his advancement to a singular circumstance. In earlier years, and during a long period, he had been engaged as tutor in the family of the Duchess of Portland, "who had not money to pay him, but she had Court influence to make him a bishop. Government patronage was something in those days, when by its application of lawn-sleeves to the creditor's person it could wipe out the private debts of patrician ladies." This is the statement of Dr. Lonsdale, in his "Cumberland Worthies;" but he states in the same paragraph that Dr. Goodenough owed his appointment "to his love of botany and the curiosity of a duchess."

To conclude with a glance at Scotland, it may be said that in that country, where religion is a very grave business indeed, benefices have been conferred for reasons which were only so in name. A story is told of a little Highland lad, intended for the ministry, who, when a student at the High School of Edinburgh, fought the big tyrant of the school in the King's Park, and won a glorious victory. But the big fellow was of good spirit, and he generously promised that whenever a living to which he had the right of nomination became vacant, he would confer it on the only boy who had ever beaten him in a stand-up fight. Thirty years elapsed before that time came, and oceans rolled between the Laird and the Doctor of Divinity; but the chivalrous though vanquished hero did not rest till he had discovered his subduer, and placed him in the position to which he had promised to raise his conqueror, a generation previous.

Again, at a curling match, the patron of several livings who was playing a game which his party was likely to lose, looked at a "probationer" who was on his side, and was about to play the last stone. "If you take this shot, I promise you the first living in my gift." This stone was delivered, and it won the game. Ten years subsequently the opportunity for the patron to keep his word presented itself, and the nomination was duly made according to promise.

Sometimes a living has been lost by mere accident. It was one of these probationers who was the aspirant

to a pulpit, and who was supping on Saturday night at the house of an elder whose guest he was to be till after he had preached his probationary sermon the next day. Towards the close of the evening, the young candidate gave as a toast, "Honest men an' bonnie lasses," at which an angry and influential member of the congregation exclaimed, "Nay, nay; the candidate wha's thinkin' o' the lasses so near to Sabbath morn is nae fit for the ministry," and the young fellow lost the prize through the excess of his gallantry.

There is one source of preferment which has recently been diverted. Lord Chancellor's livings belong to history. Sometimes the right to present was held alternately with the bishop of the diocese; and no chancellor was more watchful not to be "done out of his turn" than Thurlow. He was once waited on by a bishop's secretary, with his lordship's compliments and an expression of the prelate's belief that he had the right of presentation to one of these livings just vacant. "My compliments to his lordship," growled Thurlow, "and tell him I'll see him d—d first, before he shall present!" The secretary suggested that the message was not in a form in which he could communicate it to the bishop. "True!" said the amenable and courteous chancellor; "so give my compliments, and tell him *I'll* be d—d first before he shall present."

~~This~~ This recalls to my memory an illustration of the humour of the late Dr. Blomfield, Bishop of London



(1828–57). It is told in many ways, but the point is the same. It is to this effect. An unbeneficed clergyman found the prelate out in some quiet Swiss village in which he was sojourning for his health. The bishop had, as he thought, secured perfect immunity from all such intrusion; and, as he used to tell the story, he was annoyed at this invasion by a stranger whose visit was connected with preferment. “Ah!” remarked one of the bishop’s hearers, “I suppose you felt obliged to *see* him.” “Not a bit of it,” rejoined the bishop, gaily, “I felt very much inclined to *d—* him!”

In the old days of the Regency, when the purely clerical amusement of playing at bowls, at which countesses would keep score, had gone out, whist was considered the proper relaxation for a priest, just as now, young curates, especially if good-looking, are expected to be proficient in croquet. But they have had, and continue to have, other matters with which they find themselves face to face. Among the latter are their congregations, of whom, especially those of old, we will now say a passing word.

## CONGREGATIONS.

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**W**HETHER *nine* be the mystic number which forms a congregation that cannot be legally dismissed without performance of service, or whether *two or three* congregated together cannot be taken as constituting a congregation, or whether Dean Swift was right or wrong when, nobody being present but himself and clerk, he began, "Dearly beloved Roger, the Scripture moveth you and me in sundry places," are matters on which the sages have not yet pronounced conclusive judgment.

Few or many, congregations have been summoned by the joyous proclamation of bells for now a very long period; but these have had other offices than that of summoners.

Just nine hundred years have elapsed since the first bells rang out for church purposes in England. In 968, Abbot Turketule set up the first, and his successors added half a dozen others, that must have sounded pleasantly over those mournful Lincolnshire fens. Out of those fens Guthlac, the founder of Croyland, drove the devil. So the first bell was named

after Guthlac, and ringing of bells became a specific for routing Satan out of a district. Croyland possessed the thumb of St. Bartholomew, with which he used to cross himself when it thundered and lightened. Accordingly, one of the Croyland "ring" was named after the saint; and the ringing of consecrated bells was deemed excellent for silencing the flashing artillery of the sky. Latimer alluded to this in one of his King Edward sermons, and with a characteristic comment: "The devil should have no hiding-place in England if the ringing of bells would serve; but it is not that that will serve against the devil."

In the early days it does not seem to have been an unusual circumstance for persons to leave the church when they as little understood the preacher as Tennyson's Northern Farmer did *his*. But the abuse of this privilege caused the forfeiture of a great advantage. At a later time, if a dull sermon vexed the ear, the hearer did not leave the church, but he might rise and walk about in meditation. Disorder, however, came of it, or "misorder," as Latimer says of it, in his "Sixth Sermon before Edward VI.," when alluding to the constant shovelling of feet and walking up and down: "Truly, it is ill disorder, that folk shall be walking up and down in the sermon-time, as I have seen in this place this Lent; and there shall be such buzzing and buzzing in the preacher's ear, that it maketh him oftentimes to forget his matter." And yet, not long before this, how different was the scene

in some English churches ! Singular and touching scenes presented themselves in those churches in, and for a while after, 1538, when Bibles in English were first set up there. They were easily accessible, for the churches were always open. On Sundays especially, after service, the numbers who remained to hear the more learned read or to perseveringly attempt the task for themselves, or to learn to read by watching others, testified to the fact of the length of time since the words of the Gospel in English had fallen on English ears, or had been read by English eyes. Dr. Lingard is, no doubt, correct in his belief that portions at least of Scripture were in the hands of the Anglo-Saxons, in the English tongue of that day. But now, the English Bible was as a new book ; and villagers especially in a church gathered round a "reader," marvelling at his ability. Their whole souls were absorbed by such well-selected narratives as a reader with common sense would bring before such willing and simple-minded hearers.

In Edward VI.'s time, congregations were subject to being much disturbed, especially if the priest and people were not of the same opinion as to the Reformation. If the former were of old Romanist leanings a trustworthy preacher was put into his pulpit ; but as soon as he had got a little way in his discourse, the incumbent would set the bells going, or sympathizing choristers would commence singing, on the plea that the time for the succeeding divine service had arrived.

On other occasions the minister who had not got rid of old convictions would challenge the authorized intruder into his pulpit to substantiate what he advanced ; and altogether church-going must have been as lively and exasperating an occupation in those days as can well be imagined.

In the London churches, on the Sunday after Mary was crowned the congregations were sadly disturbed by the "watchers." These were the serving-men of the new Romanist bishops. If the service failed to satisfy the "watchers," they assailed the ministers in the coarsest terms, and blasphemed loudly at the people, who did not adapt themselves so readily to the revival of Romish customs as they were expected to do.

The great ecclesiastical feature of Cheshire and Lancashire towards the close of the sixteenth century was that congregations were not to be found in the churches. The incumbents were divided into learned and unlearned, of whom the former were non-resident, and the latter so little followed that the streets and ale-houses swarmed with people who ought to have been in church. For lack of their presence the unlearned parsons gave up service, and probably went to the ale-house too. They were bound quarterly to give in the names of non-attendants, to the justices ; but they neglected this duty, and the Cheshire and Lancashire justices themselves for the most part stayed away. Sir Edward Hastings recom-

mended to Burghley one Leonard Shawcross as a fit person to be put in the commission of the peace, on the ground that "he is the only gentleman in all the Peak who is a favourer of religion, that part of the country being mostly frequented by recusants." Often when the clergy refrained from informing against absentees from church, the intelligence was given by voluntary informers, "from love of the Gospel and the queen's safety." When, on such information commissions were issued, they were coldly executed everywhere, except by Lord Pembroke, in Wales. Indeed some of the ecclesiastical commissioners and justices themselves resorted to cock-fights and other unlawful games in church-time. When the commissioners were a little severe, their bailiffs gave private information to the recusants to keep out of the way. Now and then a whole recusant family—knight, dame, sons, and daughters—were brought under stern compulsion to go to church, but before they started you might see the whole of them stuffing their ears with wool, in order that, however attentive they might look, they might really hear nothing!

Others, who had perhaps forgotten their wool, kept up the old means of annoyance, and prevented honest listeners from hearing the preacher, by the "foot-shovelling" of which Latimer had complained. Country congregations were then made up of strange materials; and indeed those of London, in James's reign at least, seem to have been distinguished by much and

special indecorum. In fact the whole diocese seems to be obnoxious to the same charge. In what this indecorum existed may be guessed from a prescript issued by Abbot, Bishop of London, in or about 1610. It is addressed to the ministers, churchwardens, and sidesmen throughout the diocese, enjoining them to enforce the observation of a more reverent behaviour in church during the time of divine service. The prelate especially alludes to "men and boys sitting there covered with their hats on their heads, without all show of reverence or respect." Possibly decorum was not present at church for the reason that it was absent from the magisterial bench and other high fountains of example. After Sir John Millicent was knighted at Royston, in 1607, he was asked how he conformed himself to the grave justices his brothers when they met. "Why, faith!" said the knight, "I have no way but to drink myself down to the capacity of the bench!" With tosspots on the judgment-seat, no wonder that when men *did* go to church, they pulled their caps upon their brows, and looked like the justices!

The men who wore their hats in churches were spectators, audience—not worshippers. They were like the more decorous persons who crowd in at anthem time in cathedrals. They went to gratify, not to humble themselves. It is a strange fact that in James's time the churches were empty during prayers, and only filled, more or less, afterwards. For a con-

siderable period, congregations went to church more for the sake of the sermon than of the service. If that fashion lasted long, Bishop Andrews used to say, it would *eat out the rest*, and be the sole formal worship of God. It must have been coming to that undesirable condition in the church where he himself preached; not that the congregation were indifferent during prayers, for they did not assemble till prayers were over. "For proof whereof," says the bishop, "(as if all godliness were in the hearing of sermons), take this very place, the house of God, which now you see mostly well replenished; come at any other parts of the service of God (parts, I say, of the service of God, no less than this), you shall find it in a manner desolate. And not here only; but go any whither else, ye shall find even the like." And yet congregations were sometimes hardly compensated according to their expectations, although even then they might find instruction under disappointment, as South told his people. "It" (the sermon) "inevitably puts us on an act of religion; if good, it invites us to a profitable hearing; if otherwise, it inflicts a short penance, and gives an *opportunity to the virtue of patience*." It may do something more. When Galileo's ear would be no longer vexed with a senseless sermon in the cathedral of Pisa, his eye dwelt on the vibration of the lamps, and his mind was led by it to the discovery of the isochronism of the pendulum.

In December, 1628, the Rev. Dr. Mainwaring,



whose sermon on "Allegiance and Religion" had brought a fine of 1000*l.* on him, and a world of trouble to get released from paying it, obtained Laud's consent that a lecturer might read and preach on Sundays, at St. Giles-in-the-Fields. Laud's stipulations illustrate the manners of both clerics and congregations at this period. He insists that their Majesties are not to be prayed for as "the young king and young queen," but that the full titles must be given out, especially in his majesty's case, whose dignities are not to be huddled up in a "and so forth." The clergyman is also directed to incite the people to be barcheaded during the time of divine service, and at the Holy Sacrament—a direction which shows that the more decent custom was not universal. Laud appears to have allowed people to wear their hats during the sermon; but he required them to be uncovered "while the text is read upon which the preacher grounds his doctrine and exhortation." In the same year, Dr. Wren, Dean of Windsor, complained to the king of some of the congregation of the Chapel Royal, who either sat covered all prayer time, or walked and talked aloud in the quire during service. The women-folk seem to have been as audacious as the men, for the knights' stalls were occupied every Sunday, not by the "chivalry" for whom they were made, or the noble ladies whom "chivalry" adored, but by pretty waiting-maids and young damsels. Royal chapels were rather riotous places in those days.

Nor was there invariably a much greater amount of decorum in some of our cathedrals. In those of Chester and Carlisle, I find, according to a letter from Neile, Archbishop of York, to King Charles, in January 1634, that there were two services, or forms of service, celebrated there on Sundays simultaneously. "The service with voice and organs in the choir, and the reading service in the body of the church, were proceeding at the same time." This must have marred both services, and have worked contrary to edification. The king was grieved at this, and ordered a reformation; but at this very time the steward of the king's courts in the Duchy of Lancaster kept such courts in the parish churches. In those northern parts, moreover, the practice of conformity was not observed, and profound was the archiepiscopal vexation thereat. Ministers, by "chopping, changing, altering, omitting, and adding," at their pleasure, indicated that they did not deem themselves bound by the form. "Many know not," says the archbishop, "how to read the service according to the book, and those deemed themselves conformable who did not oppose it." The indecorous condition into which congregations as well as clergy had fallen at this period, is indicated by a direction of Archbishop Laud to his vicar-general, Sir Nathaniel Brent, to privately charge the archbishop's officers to set a good example by being uncovered during prayers, and also in sermon time; by bowing at the name of

the Saviour; and by using the chancels with reverence.

A better man than Laud—Sir Matthew Hale—a few years later went far beyond Laud's requirements. As he passed Baxter's door, at Acton, the conforming judge bowed, with respect, to his nonconforming friend, who held a midday conventicle in his house, but took his congregation to morning and evening service in the church. How Sir Matthew bore himself in the latter place we hear from Baxter's own pen:—"He constantly heard a curate too low for such an auditor. In common prayer he behaved himself as others, save that to avoid the differencing of the Gospel from the Epistles, and the bowing at the name of Jesus, from the names Christ, Saviour, God, &c., he would use some equality in his gestures, and stand up at the reading of all God's Word alike." In so far, however, this was not acting in conformity with the rubric; and yet for nonconformity as harmless, men of more lowly degree were punished.

I once heard Mr. Spurgeon remark to a crowded congregation in his brother's tabernacle, that they were not the ordinary members of the flock, but mere Christian vagrants. He added, with his well-known delicacy, that when such vagrants came to his own chapel, he usually sent them away "with a flea in their ear!" In the very hottest of the Puritan times in England, however, this running after preachers was much practised, allowed, and was thus ridiculed by

the anti-Puritanic author of "*Hudibras in Prose*"—"What a devout company of saints," he writes, "are Rebecca, her book, her pattens, and her stool, for all must together; nor would you think her going to church, but removing house. I wonder she is never apprehended for carrying burthens on the Sabbath day. Well, this coif and cross-cloth—this blue-aproned saint—is as much in the church as the parson's hour-glass, the hassocks, or the people that are buried there. Nor will she tire with a single hearing, but trudge from Tantlins to Tellins" (that is, from St. Antholin's to St. Helen's), "and hold out killing of a brace or two, and all long courses. Thus are they carried from ordinance to ordinance, like beggars from one church to another, that they may ply at both places."

Old St. Antholin's, or St. Antling's, but properly St. Anthony's, was the well-known City church at which a morning lecture, "in Geneva fashion," was founded, at half-past five in the morning—an hour not too early for Lilly the astrologer. The bell rang at five, and with such a clang, that a scold's tongue was said to be heard further in a still morning than St. Antholin's bell. These morning lectures were anti-monarchical, and the most successful of the young men who exercised the office were despatched into the country to spread the revolutionary principle. The St. Antholin's fervour was long maintained, and a morning lecture, modified, no doubt, was continued

till after the accession of James II. If it did not then cease, it lost its popularity, for, says an anonymous author, in 1684—"Going to St. Antlin's and morning lecture is out of fashion." St. Helen's was a church of less mark, save that William Shakspeare may be imagined as among the congregation of old, as he was an inhabitant of the parish during some time of the reign of Elizabeth.

Puritans "hummed" their approbation. Some men, but particularly those of Cambridge, hinted dislike, by scraping their feet against the ground. But when speaking above a whisper was considered unseemly in church, the audacity of the Quakers in entering the "steeple houses," making protest against the proceedings, and often behaving with the utmost indecency, excited general indignation. It is well known that Owen, the great Independent, when he was Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, officially sanctioned the flogging of a couple of Quakeresses, for speaking in church during divine worship! He stigmatized them as blasphemers and abusers of the Holy Spirit, under the influence of which they pretended to act.

Many of the Puritans manifested worse taste in their conduct at church after the Restoration, than the Cavaliers did when the Puritans had possession of the pulpits. "They tell me," writes Pepys, in August, 1662, "there has been a disturbance in a church in Friday-street, a great many young people knotting together and crying out '*porridge!*' often and sedi-

tiously in the church; and they took the Common Prayer-book, they say, away; and some say, did tear it." In Aphra Behn's political comedy, the "City Heiress"—"true Tory, loyal all over!"—(1681), *Sir Anthony Merriwill* says to *Sir Timothy Treatall*, "You came from church, too!" Sir Timothy replies, "Ay, needs must when the devil drives. I go to save my bacon, as they say, once a month, and that too after the *porridge* is served up." Nonconformists had a harder time of it, under Charles II., than the Recusants had under Elizabeth. The churches were now fuller, but with such a mixture among the congregations as is described by Pepys, and may be seen in Mrs. Behn's *Sir Timothy*.

Undoubtedly, the ministers who were restored after the coming of Charles II. had often a very troubled time of it with the Puritanical part of their congregations. For instance, at the time named, there was at Harnham (Durham) that Mistress Katherine Babington who had been in her youth so beautiful that the proprietors of cooks' shops in Sunderland, where she lived, were ordered not to allow her to eat sixpenny pies in public, "that she be not stared at of the people." When the incumbent of Harnham "came to his own again," the Puritan lady employed a young butcher to pull him out of the pulpit while he was preaching; and neither she nor her confederate cared a maravedi for the ecclesiastical censure which followed. Subsequently, they were excommunicated;

and when they came to die, the butcher was buried in a garden, and "Madam Babington" was entombed in a rocky cave, not merely with maimed rites, but with none.

But what, above all other things, the people continued to look upon as their undoubted privilege, was the unseemly practice of walking about and talking loudly in the naves of cathedrals, even though they disturbed graver people at their devotions. In the "Life of Lord Keeper North," it is said that "the gentry affect much to walk in York cathedral, to see and be seen; and the like custom is used at Durham." In the former place, Dr. Lake, when canon residentiary, determined to suppress this indecent practice at once and for ever. The mob considered this attempt an infringement on their liberties; and on being refused admission, or on being ejected, they broke open the south door of the cathedral, while some of them attacked the canon's house, and having gained admission by destroying the roof, they would probably have murdered the canon, had it not been for the arrival of Captain Honeywood, the deputy-governor of York castle. This occurred in Charles II.'s time. While walking about cathedrals with these free-and-easy gentry, let us remark, in connexion with some of the monuments there, that in spite of Mr. Bloxam's assertion that the crossed legs of knights on tombs are not signs of their having been in the Crusades, but that such form was adopted by early sculptors for

the sake of giving greater ease to the figure and a more elegant disposition of the drapery, the old idea still prevails, and will probably continue to do so, notwithstanding historical truth. An old custom connected with it has quite gone out. To ask a friend to "cross legs" for you, to sit in that position for a few minutes, was simply to ask him to insure your success in whatever you undertook at the moment he put himself in the required position.

While tarrying in the cathedral, let me further notice that "To dine with Duke Humphrey," does not, or rather *did* not, always imply to go dinnerless, like the poor fellows who loitered the dinner-hour through in Paul's Walk, where the duke's supposed tomb stood. Yet this is the only application now made of this saying. Fuller vainly pointed out, two hundred years ago, that to dine with Duke Humphrey once meant *to dine well*; that noble but unlucky Duke of Gloucester being the great patron of scholars, poets, and painters, the best of whom he loved to have with him at table.

And while tarrying with Duke Humphrey instead of being with the congregation of the faithful around the preacher, I call to mind a curious incident which used to mark sermon-time in the Jesuits' church, at Goa. In the course of delivery, the preacher held up an "Ecce Homo," that is, a crucifix. The congregation was impressionable, and the ladies, who were the chief attendants, were excessively so. At the exposition of the figure they always burst into tears, but they also



narrowly watched, the while, their own servants. If these were not as much affected as their mistresses, the latter assailed them not only with words, but with blows. They pummelled those hard-hearted menials till they were brought to a sense of their situation, or bellowed loud enough to give their mistresses pleasant conviction of their orthodox feelings.


Those ladies of the congregation at Goa hoped to profit by the forced devotion and sentiment of their servants. There was a certain amount of serious thought in this comic proceeding. The impulse of some thoughtful persons towards devotion is, not that they may attain righteousness by being devout, but that their tendency to being devout may bring them substantial profit. There is a confusion of ideas in them which is well illustrated in the case of the woman who, repenting of her wicked ways, began a better career by stealing a Bible as a proper means to the end in view. Italian brigands salute the Virgin after the commission of murder, and so balance the iniquity by a careless shred of politeness. It is like the ultra-righteous chandler, who, after his apprentice had sanded the sugar and wetted the tobacco, called the ingenuous lad to prayers. In Paris, when the old Cour des Miracles was crowded with spectators, there was also a large number of active but piously-minded thieves, present. These went to their work with the more confidence, as they had squared things with Heaven. The good and industrious men had stolen

from a neighbouring church a statuette of God the Father. They placed this in a niche in a room where they used to assemble in pious congregation, before they went abroad to cut the purses of the lieges. As they never proceeded to their professional avocations without first repeating a prayer or two before the image, they went forth comfortably fortified with the thought that they had done well, and were then about to do better.

Coming down to a later period, we shall find curious illustrations of life both at church and in the theatre. In the early part of the last century there were two clubs, whose peculiarity consisted in acting very offensively to those with whom they disagreed. The "Nose-pullers" attended the theatres. If a man seated next to one of the brotherhood, in the pit, happened to applaud when the other thought condemnation ought to have been bestowed, the "Nose-puller" immediately put in very rough practice the mode of action from which he derived his name. The other fraternity comprised certain critical persons, attending church, to whom the public assigned the name of the "Rattling Club." These people attended church for censure sake. Whenever their tastes or prejudices were offended in any way, they gazed angrily at each other, and all became excited. If they were seated in the same pew they would first put their heads together, confer lowly, then draw themselves up, spare neither expression nor gesture, grow louder in their remarks,

telegraph indignation to others of their way of thinking in distant pews, and receive signals of wrath in return. If the preacher offended them early in the sermon, the rest of his discourse was lost on the part of his hearers, for they carried on war against him, not only during the discourse, but all through (what was then invariable) the after-psalm.

The same period furnishes us with a very singular instance of a secret understanding between the preacher and one of his congregation. We owe the story to Bishop Burnet. It took place, indeed, in Mr. Bradbury's Baptist chapel. That dissenter was preaching while Queen Anne lay in her mortal illness: and towards the close of the sermon a man who had come in late, and was seated in the gallery, let his handkerchief fall into a pew below. Bradbury paused, brought his discourse to a close, and bursting into the prayer after sermon, implored God's blessing on King George the First; and he returned thanks that the Almighty had delivered this nation from the evil designs of its enemies. He then gave out a hymn of jubilation. In this case, Burnet, as he was going to Court in the morning, had met Bradbury, a Whig to the core, and a friend of the bishop. The latter had told him of the queen being in extremity, and that if her death occurred during service-time he would send a messenger who should signal the fact to Bradbury by dropping his handkerchief, as above told. Bishop Atterbury may have been *ready* to go in his



lawn sleeves and proclaim James III. at Charing-cross, but Bradbury was probably the first minister who proclaimed and prayed for King George in the pulpit.

It seems that in the reign of Anne's second successor it was a custom for women, as well as men, to be occasionally uncovered in church. A lady, writing to Mr. Fitz-Adam, in "The World," in 1753, regrets that "this uncouth taste of being hatted prevails in *almost* all the churches in town and country; matrons of sixty adopting the thoughtless whim of girls in their teens, and each endeavouring to countenance the other in this idle transgression against the laws of decency and decorum." The writer is less angry at the prevailing fashion of hats worn by ladies of all ages, than at the almost universal custom of their wearing their hats in church.

The king at that period was a notoriously unseemly conducted person at divine service. His grandson and successor exhibited more decorum, but he set a fashion which congregations have followed, without perhaps knowing to whom they are indebted for it.

Many persons are to be found in our congregations who remain seated during the reading of the Athanasian Creed. They derive this significant token of dissent, from George III.; and they may, perhaps, be the more readily excused as they only follow an example set by the head of their church. This reminds me of a circumstance in which both king and people

joined, and set a fashion which has ever since been followed. When Handel's *Messiah* was first performed, "the audience," says Forbes, in his "Life of Beattie," "were exceedingly struck and affected by the music in general ; but when the chorus struck up 'For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth !' they were so transported that they all, together with the king, started up and remained standing till the chorus was ended ; and hence it became the fashion in England for the audience to stand while that part of the music is performing."

After the Nonconformists, who always looked on the Stuarts as the true "Royal Family" of England, had lost their bishops in the regular line in Gordon, A.D. 1779, and the Separatists in Boothe, A.D. 1805, numbers of that old conscientious body were still to be seen among our congregations. A Nonconformist clergyman is said to have lived as late as 1815 ; and scattered Protestant adherents of the Stuart, who would no more acknowledge the Georges than their ancestors would have taken the oath of allegiance to William, were still to be met with in English congregations. But they were careful to carry with them a Prayer-book printed before the Revolution, whereby their consciences were saved from the sin of praying for the reigning family.

This was almost as bad as "brawling : " not that *that* is much now. The old statute on "brawling" has been so greatly modified of late, that it has none

of the terrors of the bygone time about it. The modified Act applies equally to cleric and laic, but perhaps the former may more easily brave its penalties than the latter. We all know—

“*That*, in the captain’s but a cholerick word,  
Which in the soldier is flat blasphemy;”

so that which would constitute “brawling” in any ordinary person in a congregation, is justifiable in a prelate. The Bishop of Exeter illustrated this fact in a church at Torquay, where he formed a part of the congregation. The minister was one of those men who would not mention “hell” to ears polite, and who translated some of the rough old phrases of the Bible into modern refined English. He was too much of a gentleman to tolerate strong terms at all; and therefore, at the Communion Service (his diocesan being then present), he softened the text, “Eat and drink their own *damnation*,” into “Eat and drink their own *condemnation*.” The last word had barely dropped from his tongue, when a sonorous utterance of the word “*damnation*!” rolled from the bishop’s lips. It sounded like an angry expletive, but the people understood that it was only an emphatic reproof. It was a reproof that might have awakened a congregation buried in profoundest sleep; and this reminds me of a story told, with assignment to several heroes, to the effect that a preacher, seeing many of his congregation drowsy on a sultry afternoon, roused them by the cry, “Hold up your heads,

my friends, and mind, that neither saints nor sinners are sleeping in the other world." One heavily oppressed listener, however, relapsed into somnolency, and the rather angry preacher then cried out, according to a Scottish version of the legend, "James Stewart, this is the second time that I have stopped to waken you. If I need to stop a third time I'll expose you *by name* to the whole congregation!" This is akin to the parliamentary speaker "who would not name an honourable gentleman, as he was then filling the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer!"

In another part of the world, a congregation excused itself for its drowsiness, on the ground of the hard words which the preacher employed. If he would only explain them when he introduced them they would keep awake, they said, as fast as they had hitherto been asleep. Next Sunday, on employing the word "hyperbole," the preacher, heeding the congregational request, added by way of explanation, "If I were to say 'that the whole of the congregation were sound asleep,' *that* would be an hyperbole; but if I say 'that one-half are in that disgraceful condition,' *that* would be the truth!" The difference was quite intelligible; but the reverend gentleman was subsequently informed that in like cases of difficulty he need not give himself any trouble; the congregation could help themselves by consulting a dictionary.

So many congregations in country districts, where hard-working folk attend church to enjoy the Sabbath rest, are given to venial somnolency, that I cannot wonder at some of them preferring to sit, or stand, by a gate side, and breathe an air of the fields which is so studiously kept out of the church. To bring these stragglers in, there used to be very active officials. There is a custom not yet quite extinct in country districts for the churchwardens to leave the church soon after service has commenced, and summon all stray sheep they find abroad, to go within the fold, and so increase the congregation. Many of these wardens used to be readier at precept than example. Dr. Parr is said to have loved the dear delight of a pipe, before sermon, and to have enjoyed what he loved, when he had to preach in some retired country church, smoking his pipe in some adjacent field, and asking passers-by why they were not in church ! Country wardens have been very much of Dr. Parr's quality ; and nothing used to be more common some years ago than to see them enter the village ale-house in search of skulkers from service, and not to see them come out again till they issued a little less capable than when they entered, to return to church with the steady dignity that became officials whose mission was of so sober a character.

But, *assez causé là-dessus !* I will only add that, with respect to congregations, I know of no more singular incident than one which was told to me by the



late Rev. Mr. Harding, the father of the eminent lawyer the late Sir John Harding. The above clergyman held a Welsh living, and was on very friendly terms with all the parishioners. On a week-day evening his clerk called upon him, as a sort of deputation from the congregation of the church, in whose name he made the singular request that Mr. Harding would be good enough to change the hour of afternoon service from three o'clock to two. The incumbent explained that such change would be inconvenient, would come too soon upon the morning service, and would not leave the congregation time to digest their dinner. "They don't want to," was the ready rejoinder of the clerk.

"Then they are unwise," said Mr. Harding. "But what *do* they want? Why do they wish the hour changed?"

"Well," replied the clerk, breaking the matter gently to his superior, "you see, sir, what they want is to go to the Wesleyan chapel after church is over and they can't do so unless you change the hour for beginning *your* service."

"And suppose I can't agree to change it?"

"In that case, sir, the people will go to the chapel, and will not come to afternoon church, at all!"

"Will they indeed?" said the incumbent. "Then I will give way, and keep my congregation by letting them go at a convenient hour. But I can't honestly

give them this opportunity of letting them resort to another teacher, till I am certain he can give them suitable instruction. So this is what we'll do, James. We'll let them know that on Sunday next the afternoon service shall begin at the hour they desire, and when it is over I will myself accompany them to the Wesleyan chapel. If I can approve of what I hear there, the early after-dinner service shall be continued every Sunday."

And accordingly, Mr. Harding, his own sermon concluded, put himself at the head of his people (as Baxter did in similar spirit), and went with them to hear the Wesleyan minister. "How," I asked, "did the experiment end?" "Just as it should have done," said the fine old man, with his benevolent smile. "I heard nothing but what I, as well as my people, might profit by, and I told the minister as we walked from the chapel together that he was welcome to have the loan of my congregation on the terms they had stated." After a pause, he added, "I was sadly taken to task by unyielding disciplinarians, but I am sure no Christian soul suffered by the arrangement; for the Wesleyan minister and a great part of his congregation *returned the compliment*, as they called it, by constantly attending the early afternoon services in church!"

But pleasant admixtures like the above in church congregations have not been confined to Wales. The parish church at Hammersmith was much frequented

by dissenters during the time the Rev. Philip Hold[redacted]len was curate there.

One of the most singular uses to which a church bell could be put, for the benefit of mixed congregations, occurred at Ravenstonedale, Westmorland. In the old church there was a bell called the Saint's bell. This used to be rung (according to Nicholson and Burn's history of the county), after the Nicene Creed, to call in the dissenters to the sermon. "And to this day," they say, "the dissenters, besides frequenting the meeting-house, oftentimes attend the sermon at church."

I have kept my readers too long, perhaps, standing looking at the Congregation. Let us enter the Pews.

## PEWS.

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THERE is a "History of Pews," to which all persons may be referred who are curious in such history ; and there are no practical treatises on the laws affecting the church and the clergy in which the legal question connected with pews will not be found clearly stated. I am not writing a history nor compiling a treatise, I only chat with my readers, and I can only offer them gossiping illustrations of this subject of pews. We will begin at the period when there were none.

In Anglo-Saxon times, as pious folk wended to church, where no seats were then provided, for rich or poor, every one who had not strength or inclination to stand, or at the utmost, to lean against wall or pillar, carried his seat to church with him. This consisted of a three-legged stool, and the bearer pitched his or her temporary resting place wherever it seemed good. There must have been occasional confusion attendant on the pitching and shifting of stools, but the old custom had a long life of it. When the Stuart would have established episcopacy in Scotland, it was

with their three-legged stools that the presbyterian viragos pelted the preacher who advocated prelacy.

From stools, sprang forms; forms grew into fixed benches; and when the Norman came, and looked superciliously on the mixed quality of the faithful who sat shoulder to shoulder on the common planking, he determined to pray apart. If he was a baron and a patron, he was allowed a stall in the choir; and thenceforth there was distinction between the gentry and their inferiors, and equality ceased within the house of God.

Of the derivation of the word *pew* we know literally nothing. It is supposed by some to have been a popular word, and of English formation. Of the antiquity of the word, as well as of the object which it represents, there can be no doubt. It occurs in the "Morte d'Arthur," that translation, for the most part, of French romances, by Sir Thomas Malory, printed by Caxton in 1485. In this work we find that highly respectable knight, Galahad, received hospitably in a monastery over-night, and respecting the rule of the house by hearing mass in the morning. "In the monastery he found a priest ready at the altar, and on the right side he saw a *pew* closed with iron." These closed pews must have looked something like wells; and I risk, perhaps, exciting a smile on the part of etymologists if I venture to remind them that *pol* is an old British word for a "well;" that in Britany *poul* signifies a "hole" or "port;" that *pwl*, in

Welsh, is a "ditch" or "trench" (at this day we call one filled with stagnant water a *pool*); and that from this source may be derived the name of the "pewe closyd with yron," looking so much like a well, in the church of the monastery where Galahad found an asylum. The word is to be found in the accounts of churchwardens, made long before the earliest Reformation was thought of. How loosely the word was applied, long after that event, may be seen in Pepys's "Diary," where we find him saying, on the 15th of February, 1669, that he was at the Court Theatre, at Whitehall, "but I sat so far I could not hear well, nor was there any pretty woman that I did see, but my wife, who sat in *my Lady Fox's pew* with her." Two days later the play-goer is at church, where "there was my Lord Brouncker and Mrs. Williams *in our pew*, the first time that they were ever there, or that I knew that either of them would go to church." Very few pews were erected during the Commonwealth and Protectorate, and Wren objected to the introduction of any such furniture into his London churches.

Down as late as the Plantagenet period, it is conjectured that there were neither pews nor benches in our churches. In Mirk's "Instructions for Parish Priests," written in the first half of the fifteenth century, people are told that when at church they should lean neither against the pillars nor the walls, but remain kneeling. They are also enjoined to avoid idle talk. In France a similar injunction was

supported by an assurance that the devil was very usefully employed in noting down all the vain gossip uttered during service.

But although Mirk's book does not mention pews for the common folk, the "Book of Nurture," by Russell, "sum tyme seruande wythe Duke Vmfrey of Gloucester" (which duke was murdered in 1446), shows that pews existed for the finer people. Among the duties of a chamberlain towards his master, it is said—

"Prince or primate if he be, or any other potentate,  
Ere he enter into the church, be it early or late,  
Perceiue all things for his pew, that it be made preparate :  
Both cushion, carpet, and curtain, beads, and book, forget  
not that."

Some relic of this old custom exists in those fashionable churches where magnificent flunkies bring superbly-bound prayer-books to the pews, into which, soon after, sail or sweep fine ladies, so well trained, that of each it might be said—" *Hæc nunc auratâ cyclade verrit humum.*"

Pews, then, were introduced prior to the Reformation. All that now remain are said to be of the Late Perpendicular era. Among the church matters about which men quarrelled in Sir Thomas More's time, was "the sitting of their wives' pews." The ladies liked to be in conspicuous situations, and their husbands upheld their pride. But pews were used sometimes as pillories, where alleged slanderers

of priests had to stand up in face of the congregation, and confess aloud that they had lied; but they sometimes added an "aside" to their friends, that the priest was, in truth, no better than he should be.

In the earlier days, religious books were provided in pews for the edification of members of congregations, and with confidence in the honesty of the readers; but, says an old writer, "since, to the great reproach of the nation, and a much greater one of our holy religion, the thievish disposition of some that enter into libraries, to learn no good there, hath made it necessary to secure the innocent books, and even the sacred volumes themselves, with chains—which are better deserved by those ill persons, who have too much learning to be hanged, and too little to be honest."

A local potentate in those days never looked so "thrice potential" as when he sat enthroned, as it were, in the family pew. His lady shared his state with him, and the damsels looked up from their books to heaven and the gallants—if they were only tall enough for the latter part of their devotional exercise. The Pew itself was the platform on which their unaffected family pride manifested itself, and showed how good it was to be there. It was part of the family estate, and was stately kept accordingly.

In the Elizabethan period, the pew of the chief local family, in country churches, was florally ornamented. The dresser of a pew of this character, introduced, with



a sublime contempt for chronology, in the old play of "Appius and Virginia," says to one who had impeded her work by his trifling with her :—

"Thou knave, but for thee, ere this time of day,  
My lady's fair pew had been strew'd full gay,  
With primroses, cowslips, and violets sweet,  
With mints and with marigolds, and marjoram meet,  
Which now lyeth uncleanly, and all along of thee."

Pews holding persons of less dignity or attractiveness were "strawed." In both cases this must have been done at the expense of the occupants. They who could not afford it were of course "not worth a straw."

Whether the custom of separating the sexes in church ever generally prevailed is doubtful. That an opposite custom was followed at one period is manifest from the objection once made by the Spanish legate, Mendoza, who, being in company where a discussion on the matter was in progress, strongly condemned the practice of men and women sitting side by side in pews, or otherwise together, in church. The Spaniard maintained that the practice was fraught with danger. Dr. Dale, the Master of the Court of Requests, made reply with a sort of *Honi soit qui mal y pense* for his device, declaring that however it might be in Spain, English people thus brought together in the house of God were thinking only of the Spirit, and that the contiguity of hearts drawing near each other in prayer could only displease the devil.

When Sir Thomas More sat in the aisle, as a pro-

test against pews, the latter had not fallen into the condition in which we find them in 1611, when in the accounts of St. Margaret's there is the following item:—"Paid to Goodwyfe Wells, for salt to destroy the fleas in the churchwardens' pew, 6*d*." The pew was probably "baized," and the materials old. Twenty years later, Bishop Corbet sent up a protest against the luxurious pews, different in quality from that at St. Margaret's. "Stately pews," says the bishop, "are now become tabernacles, with rings and curtains to them. There wants nothing but beds, to hear the Word of God on. We have casements, locks and keys, and cushions—I had almost said bolsters and pillows: and for these we love the church! I will not guess what is done within them: who sits, stands, or lies asleep at prayers, communion, &c.; but this I dare say, they are either to hide some vice or to proclaim one; to hide disorder or proclaim pride."

In the early part of Charles I.'s reign a slight effort was made by a muscular Christian or two, here and there, to upset individual right in pews. In a City church, one of these reformers would disturb a whole congregation by intruding himself into "private pews," and having fluttered the town, would go, on other Sundays, and frighten country churches from their propriety. The church annals of Richmond (Surrey) afford some curious illustrations of this innovation—breaking into pews, fights with churchwardens, interventions of the

vestry, and the Bishop of Winchester (Andrews) inclined to favour the invaders.

This was in 1626, when the Richmond vestry exercised despotic authority in the redistribution of seats. Ten years later, a curious redistribution of pews took place in the churches in Coventry, when much transmutation of forms was being prosecuted in the Church generally. The "gentlemen of quality" were ill provided with seats, while the magistrates' wives sat in a sort of separate state in their several peculiar pews. The diocesan accommodated both, as he thought, by putting all the magistrates' wives together in a corporate seat, while the church-going gentlemen of quality were disposed of in the scattered seats formerly occupied by those ladies. The latter, when they were first caged thus, with all their little provincial feelings of envy, if not worse, among them, must have been an amusing spectacle for the "quality." This would indicate ignorance; but there was a plentiful want of knowledge, and a lack of respect for it, in Coventry. At this very time, the church-books were not only locked in a chest, but the chest was railed in, "to keep out children from tearing the books."\*

When Pepys took his wife to Whitehall Chapel in March, 1667, he found an arrangement there with respect to pews, which recognised distinctions that

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\* "Calend. State Papers:" Domestic, 1636-7. Ed. by J. Bruce. Page 95.

are not supposed to be recognised in heaven. "There," he says, "I put my wife into the pew below, but it was pretty to see, myself being but in a plain band, and everything else ordinary, how the verger took me for her man, and I was fain to tell him that she was a kinswoman of my Lord Sandwich's, he saying that none under knights-baronets' ladies are to go into that pew."

If we go from Whitehall to Richmond, we shall find in the vestry books for 1679 a reason which is no reason for assigning seats to two particular ladies. The entry orders "that Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Cross, in regard of their occupations of being midwives, be placed in the second seat from Sir Francis Compton's, being marked with the number 16." Why a pew should intervene between these *sages-femmes* and the knight one cannot venture to guess at. The Richmond despots were capricious, and assigned no reasons. In 1700 I find them ordering "that Mr. Piggot and Mr. Pike be seated in the gallery with Mrs. Wood, widow." This was perhaps to afford the widow a chance with Mr. Pike, for his male friend was married. But *he*, too, in due time left a widow, and the gallant vestry-men, mindful of her interest, it may be supposed, ordered "that Mr. Twydale be seated with Mrs. Piggot."

In further illustration of this subject as regards the last century, an amusing instance of the way of furnishing pews for miserable sinners is afforded by Horace Walpole, who speaks of one as "*a modernity*"

which beats all antiques for curiosity," and proceeds to say that near the high altar in Gloucester Cathedral is "a small pew hung with green damask, with curtains of the same; a small corner cupboard (painted, carved, and gilt) for books, and two troughs of a bird-cage with seeds and water. If any mayoress on earth was small enough to enclose herself in this tabernacle, or abstemious enough to feed on rape and canary, I should have sworn it was the shrine of the Queen of the Aldermen. It belongs to a Mrs. Cotton, who, having lost a favourite daughter, is convinced her soul is transmigrated into a robin redbreast; for which reason she passes her life in making an aviary of the Cathedral of Gloucester. The chapter indulge this whim, as she contributes abundantly to glaze, white wash, and ornament the church."

The custom—a country one—of putting the pew-occupant's name on a brass plate on the pew-door—often the names of the various occupants, would seem to bespeak a church-going and zealous congregation. But Mr. Hannett, in his work, "The Forest of Arden," referring to this practice in Rowington Church, remarks, that "this vulgar practice arises from the infrequent attendance of the parishioners. . . . The intervals at which they present themselves at church being so great, that without this contrivance they would forget their own pews." These Warwickshire people do not seem to be even up to the mark of the English farmer who blessed the Sabbath because

he could, on that day, go to his pew in church, put up his legs, and "think o' nothin'!" At the beginning of the last century we find some of the Warwickshire constables busily employed in carrying before the justices the younger folk who "would not go to service." These showed less alacrity in observing the formality than the dog at Congreve, which went every Sunday, throughout the whole year, to Penkridge Church, while that building was under repair; and whenever he could get in he passed the usual and proper time in the family pew. Nothing is more common in old churchwardens' accounts than entries of small sums paid to persons "for whipping the dogs out of church." On the part of the quadrupeds there seems to have been an inclination to accompany their masters to church. In this respect they were better trained dogs than one with which I was acquainted some years ago. To *him*, Sunday was an institution of the greatest abhorrence. This sad dog's name was "Pepper." He was accustomed daily to go to his master's dressing-room door, lie down by the side of his boots, and accompany him afterwards, either shooting, hunting, or on a stroll through the woods. On the first day in the week, boots of a more refined shape, make, and material, stood at that door. The jocund Pepper on seeing them immediately recognised the sign which, whenever it presented itself, was followed by total abstinence of all that made that dog's life tolerable—rollicking it abroad in pursuit of sport, or in idle enjoyment about

the fields and in the thickets. All the hilarity seemed then to depart from him. He became morose, would not be comforted, whined, went restlessly in and out of the house, occasionally extending himself at the hall door, with his eyes savagely bent on the church tower. He associated the old tower with the melancholy of the day, and not without reason. When the bells began to ring for service, Pepper then knew that the hated day had come round, and that there would be no jolly vagabondizing for him. He howled as the bells pealed, with a fiendish tone of execration, as if he would silence what could not, however, be hushed. Subsequently, as master and family passed through the porch and along the path that led to the church, close by, Pepper would gaze at them with a combination of looks ;—a lack-lustre look at the calamity that was imminent ; an expression of utter incomprehensibility of the absurd proceedings of the household generally ; and a moaning deprecation of a course of conduct that inflicted the utmost pain on his feelings. Suddenly he would make a dart towards the meadows, as if his master must, of course, follow him. There was an amiable shake in his tail as he went off, that was meant for an invitation to follow. He would not look back—*that* would be doubting his own happiness—but anon, as those horrid bells still rang on, Pepper would stop short and gaze right ahead, as if in sure expectation that his master was approaching ; but then, hearing no sound of such welcome fact,

his eyes would move in a semi-backward direction, while his head remained still ; presently his head would be on the ground or under his legs, the eyes taking a furtive glance of mingled hope and fear. All-suddenly again, at the well-remembered sound of the "ringing-in," Pepper would jump round, on all his four feet at once, gaze piteously towards his masters and mistresses, the heads and the children of the family, and break out into little, sharp, remonstrative barks, to impress upon that goodly company the utter absurdity of their doings ! This being unheeded, he would resign himself to fate, and follow, humiliated and degraded, in their wake. He never ventured farther, however, into the church than to satisfy himself that the great pew absorbed the family, tutor, visitors, and all. Then giving a snort, as if he would say, "Much good may it do you !" Pepper would scuffle out of the church as noisily as his contempt would enable him to do, and, darting across the kitchen garden on to Goldsborough Moor, he made his presence known among the rabbits there, as if he meant to proclaim his utter disregard of all serious principles. Occasionally, Pepper was arrested by a keeper and shut up ; but generally he had his two hours' run, and at one o'clock he was to be found, covered with tokens of the soil and the toil he had been through, lying on the topmost step of the hall-door, with a quiet air of being a clean, well-dressed, and gentlemanlike dog who had done his part of the Sunday duty, and had



thereby earned a joyous afternoon walk by the Wharfe side, with any of the company who cared to be with him.

In old times, the presence of dogs in churches was considered a great profanation. The words of Revelation xxii. 15, "Ἔξω οἱ κύνες," were taken to imply that dogs must be kept out. "*Qu'on les dehors les chiens*" is cited from the Apocalypse on the front of the church of St. Francis Xavier, at Brugha as scriptural prohibition against dogs. Here is an illustration of what the old feeling was in Wales, in this respect, in the eleventh century :—In 1098, Hugh, Earl of Shrewsbury, one night put his dogs into the church at Llandyfrydog. The story runs that they all went mad, and that the sacrilegious earl shortly afterwards perished miserably—that is to say, within a month expiated the crime of kennelling his hounds in the church pew, by suffering a soldier's death at the hands of Magnus, King of Norway.

In some of the old family pews in Yorkshire churches *afternoons* were not invariably spent as well as they might be. I remember being struck with the comfort of the squire's pew in the church at Bramham. I appreciated the admirable fire which blazed up the chimney, while the wind howled and the snow fell in flakes without ; and we sat round that fire, "misericordant sinners," to hear prayers read and a sermon preached "worshipping God" as the former was called. In earlier days, as the now defunct squire told me,

and his brothers being sent alone "to church," one wintry afternoon after their early dinner, took some chesnuts with them, which they proceeded to roast on the bars of the grate as soon as the sermon commenced. All seemed to be going on most promisingly, when the chesnuts gave token of their being ready, by a quick succession of loud explosions ! There was a general sensation in the church, where the most curious faces were those of the delinquents themselves, with the red-hot chesnuts hastily transferred to their pockets, gazing over the family pew into the midst of the congregation as if they expected to find the offender in that direction !

Fearfully cold are some of those northern churches, and it would appear that some of those in the south and east are not less so. In the last case an excellent remedial precedent was instituted during the last winter by a south-eastern incumbent. The day was intensely cold. At the conclusion of the prayers, the good man addressed the congregation thus, "My dear friends, during the last fortnight you have been kindly supplied with many excellent books ; you can read them profitably by your own firesides, and I have no doubt that you will be more comfortable than sitting here this cold day listening to my sermon." When one remembers that the merciful are promised mercy, and that the humble shall be exalted, there is justification in our varying the condition of this modest and con-

siderate shepherd, not a hundred miles, says the *South-Eastern Gazette*, from the "Lydden Spout."

Let me add with reference to dogs in churches, for the whipping of which animals out of pews and passages a salary was given, that an infidel Moor who had been in England told Lancelot Addison (father of the Essayist), when he was in Barbary, that nothing had shocked him more in this country than to see women, dogs, and dirty shoes admitted into an edifice devoted to the worship of God.

The farmer who praised his Sunday and his pew, because then and there he could *put up his legs and think o' nothing*, was not much more, if *so* profane as the maids of honour and officers whose ogling one another over the low tops of the pews in the Chapel Royal was stopped by the introduction of high partitions. This enabled the high-born husseys to scrawl billets-doux and read any books that pleased their fancy. Pews seem to be made places of study in other ways. Some years ago, I happened to be shown into the Corporation pew, at Bryanstone, Dorset. I took up a book which proved to be our Common Prayer Book in Latin. Its owner was absent, but he evidently turned his pew time to account, by keeping up his Latin, perhaps acquiring it by following the English service through the Latin form. Before leaving, I showed the book to a modest municipal officer who was present, and asked him, with a smile, if the book was his, and if the pew was his usual place for the

study of languages. "Mine!" cried the rather scandalized official, "I never understood a word of French in my life, and what's more, don't want to!" Church, State, and old English pew, cushioned, partitioned, and curtained, were institutions safe in that ultra-conservative officer's hands.

I presume that no incumbent can convert free-seats into rented pews without the sanction of the bishop; but I think it is quietly done, nevertheless. I know a church where some free-seats were occupied by portions of the families of shopkeepers, of a morning, by other members of the same families in the evening. They looked upon those places as virtually their own, and nobody ever usurped them. They were thorough-going church attenders. Suddenly, however, those seats were converted into handsome pews, with rents to match, and they were instantly occupied by very handsomely-dressed worshippers indeed. The evicted tenants might perhaps have seated themselves on a sort of shelf or knifeboard on the north and south walls of the church, but they did not; they altogether disappeared from the congregation, and I suppose swelled the assemblies at the dissenting or Romanist chapels. It seemed to me a cruel case; and though I felt a very sincere respect for the incumbent, his preaching, from that day forth, was, to me, "leather and prunella," not so pure as tinkling brass and sounding cymbal.

What the law is with regard to pews may be dis-

covered in various legal handbooks. That purchasers should be well assured of the ownership of sellers may be illustrated by the following circumstance :—In St. Anne's church, Dublin, there was an unoccupied pew, which was supposed by a lady named Keating to belong to an Irish peer, Lord M——. On the lady offering to buy it of him, he observed that he was not aware of his having any right to possess it; but on being assured that he was mistaken, his lordship readily sold his right for a sum agreed upon. When the lady was about to take possession on the following Sunday, she was informed that the pew really belonged to Lord Kerry, and access was denied to her. Whereupon she waited upon Lord M—— to express her indignation at his selling what did not belong to him. The pauper peer truly affirmed that he had denied all knowledge of having property in the pew which the lady had insisted on buying from him. "Well," said Mrs. Keating, "give me back my money!" "It's all gone!" said my lord, laughing. "Think of your character!" she exclaimed. "Oh, that's gone too, long ago!" was the laughing reply; and the lady lost both pew and purchase money. The vendor was a rascal, for all his apparent fairness. As colonel of a militia regiment, he excited the disgust of the Lord Lieutenant by selling commissions in it. He excused himself by saying that his Excellency had recommended him to assimilate his militia regiment to those of the line. "Now in

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the line, your Excellency, the commissions are always sold!"

It is hardly conceivable that a man could exercise any selfishness with regard to his possession of a pew; but there *are* illustrations even of this poor spirit. A stranger once opened the door of a pew in which there was but one person seated; that one person, however, placed his hand firmly on the door, and said in an angry whisper, "You have made a mistake; this is *my* pew!" "True," replied the stranger, meekly, but with provokingly humble sarcasm, "true; I have made a mistake. I thought it was a Christian gentleman's!" and he turned away to another quarter of the church, where he found what he sought. Let us do the same, and may it be with similar result—although we treat of sermons and their preachers.

## DESULTORY NOTES ON STRAY SERMONS.

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“**I**LL fed and worse taught” may describe the bodily and mental condition of the Christianized Britons, if the testimony of Gildas may be taken without reserve. We have been accustomed to think that the English or Anglo-Saxons were not much better off; but the truth is that their kitchens were on a respectable footing, and that their churches resounded early with sermons which, it must be confessed, were not so agreeable to our ancestors as the sing-song sermons chanted to them by itinerant missionaries by the wayside.

“Let not your tongue cease to preach,” was one of the recommendations of Dunstan in the tenth century to Wulfsine, when the latter was consecrated Bishop of Sherborne. About the same period a remarkable book of sermons was written, or rather compiled, for the use of priests who could not compose their own. The compiler was Ælfric. His work has been called the first collection of sermons in English; but as Ælfric produced his book on account of the alleged

errors he had found in other English writers of sermons (now unknown), it is clear that he was rather a reformer than an originator.

Ælfric's sermons did not cost him any outlay of thought. With a little copying, first from one manuscript then from another, a classifying of subjects, and a thin thread on which to hang them, the thing was done. From a German monk, who in the ninth century had written an everyday book of homilies founded on the Gospels and Epistles ; from another of the same period who had framed similar homilies for Sundays and saint-days ; from Fathers, like Augustine and Jerome ; from Pope Gregory and from the historian Bede, Ælfric took what he thought would be to his purpose and to the people's profit, and probably even bishops, whose tongues were ordered never to cease preaching, read now and then to wondering congregations a sermon from Ælfric, or got an idea from his collection and dressed it up after such fashion as would compel attention from congregations given to wool-gathering.

Voltaire pithily said that a preacher was five feet above contradiction. This was not the case in the above old days of preaching itinerants ; but it is a fact that has irritated many a hearer in later times. Bishop Horsley once, meeting Lord Thurlow at Brighton, expressed a hope that he would come and hear the prelate preach on the following day. " No, I'll be d—d if I do," cried the keeper of the king's



conscience ; “ I hear you talk nonsense enough in the House of Lords, but there I can and do contradict you, and I’ll be d—d if I go and hear you where I can’t ! ” Horsley was amused, not shocked, for he was himself a swearer. In the earlier days, as I have said, there was more questioning on the part of hearers than there is (or could be permitted) now. The fashion may have been the more readily tolerated as the apostles sometimes put such queries to our Lord as may entitle them to the honour of being the original *Free Inquirers*. St. Augustine did not care how much he was questioned so that the querists were edified. Indeed, that great preacher was so thoroughly of opinion that the first thing required by a preacher was that he should be understood by his congregation that he himself adopted a “ useful negligence ” of grammar when he could thereby get sooner at the minds of his hearers. Thus, he approves of the early preachers in Africa who used to say *ossum* instead of *os* to distinguish a *mouth* from a *bone*.

St. Augustine as little cared for grammar when he wished to make himself understood as some of the Oxford professors, in the sixteenth century, cared for Hebrew as a better means of understanding Scripture. In 1538 there was great excitement at Oxford against what was called the “ new learning.” The rabbis who cursed father who taught their children Greek, and the children also who contrived to learn that anti-Hebraical language were not more fierce against it than the Oxford divine

of the old school. The latter, however, had opponents to their conservative principles. The students profited by the circumstance, and arrayed themselves in two furiously-glad and eager factions of Greeks and Trojans. The Oxford pulpits resounded with denunciations of Greek literature. They who favoured Greek studies were branded as "heretics," the teachers of the language were assailed as "huge devils," and the students who nibbled at that fruit of the tree of knowledge were politely described as "little demons!" Even in presence of King Henry, the old-school preachers anathematized Greek by name, and Erasmus by implication. One of these preachers, after such a sermon, was summoned before the king. He fell on his knees and pleaded that he had been carried away "by the Spirit"—"of foolishness," said the sovereign. Then, with regard to his denunciations of the works of Erasmus, he was asked which of them he had read, and the wretched fellow kissed the rod of humiliation when he acknowledged that he had not read any! Whereat, Henry contemptuously called him "Fool!" and the preacher, as if to justify the application of the title, remarked: "After all, I am not so *very* hostile to Greek letters, because they were derived from the Hebrew!" Whereupon the king bade him begone. Subsequently Henry expressed an intimation that the students would do well to devote themselves with energy to the study of Greek literature; and this intimation put an end to the boisterous controversy.

If there was ever a time in which we might suppose men would little care to run the risk of being outspoken, it was during the reign of Henry VII, when the words that might please to-day might just as easily bring death on the morrow. Yet were men so determined to preach that Sir Thomas More (who sat in the aisle as a protest against pews, and put on a surplice, that he might serve the priest at the altar—denounced in his "Dialogue" the "foolishness of men of whom," he said, "that such a scabbed itch of vain glory catch they in their preaching, that though all the world were the worse for it, and their own life lie thereon, yet would they long to be pulpit-ed.")

Referring to other chapters in which the pulpits of intervening reigns are spoken of, I will pass to that of James I., especially at Cambridge University, where the preachers had little affection for the king's Calvinism. To the royal face a preacher, named Simpson, in 1618, upheld Arminianism so unreservedly, that he was led before the king and bidden retract on the following Sunday what he had previously asserted. In the second sermon Simpson avoided the subject altogether, to James's great disgust. The king took order that Simpson should "clearly deliver his mind" in a future sermon; but the preacher had already done that in his first discourse, and so the matter ended.

One of the best of the divines whom James I. raised to the bench, namely, Launcelot Andrews, Bishop of

Chichester, A.D. 1605, was a most careful composer of sermons. He revised the most of them three times before preaching, and he was so fearful of "running to seed," as it were, by officiating in the pulpit too frequently, that he used to say of himself that, "whenever he preached twice the same day at St. Giles's, he *prated* once."

As good and as great a man as Andrews was Sanderson, Charles I.'s chaplain, afterwards Bishop of Lincoln (1660-63). It was said of Bishop Sanderson's sermons, after they were published, that the best sermons ever read were never preached. At that time there was a prejudice against sermons being read. Sanderson not only read his fine sermons, but marred their quality by reading them ill. He was a nervous reader; but having an excellent memory, he was counselled to learn his sermons and repeat them as they were written. He tried this once with a short discourse in a country church, and gave the copy to his friend Dr. Hammond, who kept it under his eye while Sanderson preached. But before a third of it had been got through, the old nervousness destroyed memory: the preacher was out both as to matter and method; and the congregation became sensible that there was something wrong. As Sanderson and Hammond walked away together, the bishop, taking the manuscript, remarked that no man living should ever persuade him to preach again save from his written copy. "Good doctor," said Hammond, "be

not angry ; for if ever I persuade you to preach again without book I will give you leave to burn all the books I am master of."

Other preachers have had other difficulties, which they have surmounted with more or less success. When a clergyman is also a poet, we may expect to find a mixture of fiction and sentimentalism in some of his discourses, and especially in his funeral sermons. Dr. Donne affords an illustration of this fact. The mother of George Herbert, that true priest and true poet, married in her mature widowhood,—after she had borne that state for twelve years,—with Sir John Danvers, a handsome and smooth-faced young spendthrift, who, in point of years, might have been her son.\* What was the quality of this married life we know not, but we learn that Lady Danvers was a truly good lady, who fell into deep and settled melancholy before her death, and that her platonic admirer, Donne, preached her funeral sermon. In this he made allusion to the ill-assorted marriage, and thus got over the obvious difficulty, in a poet-like way—“As the well tuning of an instrument makes higher and lower strings of one sound, so the inequality of their years was thus reduced to an evenness, that she had a cheerfulness agreeable to his youth, and he had a sober steadiness conformable to her more advanced years. So that I would not consider her at so much

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\* “Camden Miscel.,” vol. v. J. Bruce, Esq.

more than forty, nor him at so much less than thirty at that time; but as their persons were made one and their fortunes were made one, by marriage, so I would put their years into one number, and finding a sixty between them, think them thirty a-piece!"

Although good preachers were far from scorned in the seventeenth century, there were many against whom objection could be fairly taken. Some were verbose, without any merit by way of compensation. Such as these were referred to when Owen Feltham, in the seventeenth century, expressed his wonder that men could preach so little and so long;—"so long a time and so little matter; as if they thought to please by the inculcation of their vain tautologies." It was Owen's maxim that a good tongue in the pulpit would never want a good pair of ears in the congregation. We probably all remember the smart Yankee remark, "that if a preacher couldn't strike ile in twenty minutes, it was a sign that he was either boring with a wrong gimlet, or didn't know how to use it." Feltham was in some sort father of this idea, two hundred years ago, when he said, "If we out of copper, lead, or pewter preaching can extract pure gold, 'tis no impeachment to our wise philosophy."

There were two divines raised to the episcopal bench in the same year, 1662—namely, Seth Ward to Exeter, and Herbert Croft to Hereford—who as preachers especially pleased Charles II. "They were the only

two of his bishops," he used to say, "from whom it was impossible to hear a bad sermon."

"Similitudes" were so much in fashion in sermons, in Charles II.'s reign, that the preacher who could stuff his discourse with the greatest number was the most admired man, particularly if he puzzled his hearers. Such a man was the envy of the dunces in the pulpit who lacked learning enough to build up a simile. But for these babes of grace there were literary go-carts, just as there are books of rhymes for those who are not poets enough to make them. So were those manuals of similitudes published in the above reign, ready-made, applied, and fitted to most preaching subjects—as Eachard says, "for the help of young beginners, who sometimes will not make them fit handsomely." These young beginners were often admitted to pulpits before they had arrived at the canonical age, by means of a *dispensation*, which, remarks the author last quoted, "will presently make you as old as you please."

The clergy of the deanery of Craven may be said to make the Vicar of Bray hide his diminished head. From the period of the Six Articles, in Henry VIII.'s time, down to the Restoration, no adverse pressure against the powers that be was ever made from a Craven pulpit. Interested and compliant, the preachers in Craven supported every government in turn. They were unmoved when ecclesiastical consciences were so much harassed during the Civil Wars. "Not a name

of the whole number," says Dr. Whitaker, "appears in the catalogue of sufferers exhibited on the two opposite sides by Calamy and Walker. The surplice or the gown—the Liturgy or Directory—Episcopal, Presbyterian, or Congregational government—a king, a commonwealth, or an usurper,—all these changes, and all the contradictory engagements which they imposed, were deemed trifling inconveniences in comparison with the loss of a benefice." The Yorkshire incumbents in the Deanery knew when they were well off, and tuned their pulpits to harmonious measure accordingly.

If some clergymen have preached other men's sermons, there is at least one instance on record of a preacher standing in the pulpit while his discourse was delivered by another! It is an impudent story, told by Father Pius à Spiritu Sancto, in his wild romance called "*The Life of St. Paul of the Cross*" (founder of the Passionists). It is *so* impudent that I avoid the responsibility of telling it in my own homely terms, and prefer adopting the words of the Father, who has not been afraid to put it in print as *he* obtained it from an older chronicler, the Canon Don Giuseppe Paci, who was present at the mission sermons of Father Paul, the Passionist—"The saint ordered him to come in surplice on the platform and hold the crucifix whilst he preached. The canon gave this evidence: 'As soon as the sermon began I heard a voice, and could not tell what it was like—it seemed as the



voice of a prompter—and I distinctly observed that every word Father Paul spoke I had heard already. The circumstance surprised me exceedingly, as nothing of the kind ever occurred to me before or since. I then began to try and find where the voice came from. There was no one on the platform but Father Paul and myself, and there was no one near enough to it to be heard in a whisper. I concluded, therefore, that the voice was supernatural. Divine it must have been, and it continued throughout the sermon, for no human voice could produce such effects. There was not one present who did not weep abundantly; and well they might, for the words of the missionary would have softened a heart of flint.”

Such is the “simple story,” and we need wonder the less at some other things which are told of this dual style of preaching. It is said that the preacher’s words could reach the ear at any distance. Sinners lying lazily in bed, or lounging impiously in the fields when they should have been in church, were stung to the quick by the preacher’s denunciations of their iniquities. Saints patiently enduring pain on their couches, or faintly breathing the fresh air, too ill to repair to church, were comforted by the words of a sermon which was being delivered at the distance, it might be, of a league or twain!

This was in the last century. In the present one there was a preacher who, without any pretence to miracle, could be heard, in a certain sense, by those

who did not comprehend the language in which he spoke, or who could catch expression only through the eye, not through the ear. Father Bresson, one of Lacordaire's Dominicans, was the man. This French artist-monk could not, like Cardinal Wiseman, preach equally well in half-a-dozen languages—he could only preach in his own. But when he did so at Rome, the Italians said “they did not need to understand French, for the sight of him was as good as a sermon—so ardent was the sensibility of his countenance, so evident the sincerity which breathed from his whole aspect.” A Lorraine peasant who listened to him, said—“He has no need to speak; his look is enough to convert me.” A soldier, too far off to catch his words, turned to his comrade and said—“Look at that man there, he is a speaking crucifix” (*“Cet homme là, c'est un crucifix qui parle !”*)\*

Imaginary dialogues between dissenting preachers and scriptural personages constantly enlivened the nonconforming pulpits. Huntington, “S.S.,” or *Sinner Saved*, once stopped St. Paul and St. James to have a little talk with them. He “my dear Paul”-ed and “my dear James”-ed them, and spoke to them with great familiarity, but without absolute vulgarity. The preacher ended an inductive process with St. James by bringing him into complete accord with St. Paul. Whereupon the former confessed it was so,


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\* “Memoir of Lacordaire,” p. 107.

adding—"The only difference between us is that we were speaking to different persons under different circumstances."

A little casuistry might enable a clergyman to prove that he was preaching his own sermons when he was delivering discourses that had been written for him by his wife—a condition of things that is not without example at the present day. I know one instance where the lady assuredly composes better sermons than her husband could produce, though he were to cudgel his brains for a month to that end. Indeed, I have heard a lady preach her own sermons in an English parish church—that of Knaresborough—and any superior to them was rarely heard in that edifice. She was the sister of the incumbent, the Rev. Mr. Chase, whose productions were not without merit, but they were not of so lofty an eloquence as his sister's. The lady used to preach on work-day evenings, and to very excellent effect; but my impression is—I am referring to matters thirty years old—that the bishop interfered. He would not tolerate such a *persona ecclesiæ*, and in such a *gown*. The lady's ministrations were accordingly confined to giving lectures in the school-room.

A curious illustration of this subject once presented itself to me in one of our western villages. The rector and the curate had been absent for some time; but they were efficiently represented while they were away. They returned to resume duty on the same day. The curate took the morning service, while the



rector officiated for a friend in a neighbouring parish; but the rector was present in the evening to preach after the curate had read prayers. The sermon in the morning was so good that the members of the congregation congratulated themselves on the effects which change of air had had on the preacher's style and powers generally. When the rector ascended the pulpit in the evening they hoped that a judicious holiday-time had had the same effect upon him, and they felt they would be the better able to judge when they heard him give out the same text which had formed the subject of the curate's illustration in the forenoon. Very soon, however, they found that it was not only the same text, but the same sermon; and *then* the faces of the congregation assumed a variety of expression that might have defied Herr Schultze himself to represent. There was but one placid countenance in the whole church, and that was the preacher's, who went on quite unconscious of the day's history and its consequences. There was but one face besides that did not bear upon it an expression of fun, or comic surprise, or a laughable perplexity and puzzlement, and that was the curate's. *He*, good man! looked the more concerned and abashed as he tried to look otherwise—the more he strove to assume a guise of indifference the more intensely horrified he grew. In short, the two worthy personages had, unknown to each other, purchased a dozen or so of lithographed manuscript sermons, and

they had had the ill luck, without communication with each other, to select the same sermon wherewith to inaugurate their return to the old pasture. The people, however, were good-natured people, the two clergymen were worthy men, and beyond a harmless joke or two no harm came of this little misadventure.

It is more dangerous, perhaps, to preach the printed than the written sermons of other people. I remember an illustration of this in the case of a "popular preacher." On leaving his church, where he had delivered a very original discourse, he asked a clerical friend who had been present, what he thought of the sermon. The friend spoke of it in terms of the warmest praise, and then the subject was dropped. In the course of the following week, however, the friend, for purposes of his own, purchased three volumes of sermons delivered and printed in America a dozen years before. In the second volume, opening it by chance, he came upon the very original sermon that his friend had preached and asked his opinion of on the previous Sunday! He quietly put that volume in his pocket and went down to the chapel. "Jack!" said he—they were both of the free and easy style of popular preacher—"Jack! what rascals these Yankees are! Here" (taking out the book) "they have taken the excellent sermon I heard you preach last Sunday, and printed it—a dozen years ago!" Jack laughed, hummed a tune, offered his friend a cigar, and walked away to one of the theatres!

But printed sermons are bought for the purpose of appropriation, and this may be done with the utmost fairness. For example, a young clergyman may justifiably read them for an "idea," and having appropriated that, he incurs no blame if he proceeds to work it out independently. That this is often done is proved by the case of a clergyman who printed a volume of funeral sermons on imaginary public occasions. They remained unsold, uncared for, on the publisher's shelves, and a heavy balance-sheet was being struck against the author; but, luckily for him, the Duke of Wellington died, and the defunct hero was to be made *the* subject in all the churches. The publisher was overwhelmed with applications for funeral sermons; and recommending his long-forgotten stock of that article, he speedily got rid of the whole venture. Many a discourse on the great soldier's death came from that convenient manufactory.

That religion and charity do not invariably go hand in hand there are many proofs. Dr. Saunders, the priest who "agitated" Ireland, under a commission from the Pope during a part of Elizabeth's reign, publicly preached in support of a massacre of Protestants. The brief-lived Emperor of Mexico, Iturbide, but before he was raised to the perilous dignity, made a similar but more practical demonstration of how charity harboured with religion in his bosom. It is recorded in his own handwriting that on Good Friday, 1814, "in honour of the day, he had just

ordered three hundred excommunicated wretches to be shot."\*

At that period, and for some years previously, the long war with France had cultivated our antipathies much more than our sympathies. One of the French prisoners in England, M. Pillet, wrote one of those books in which it is easy to see that imagination breeds some of the "facts," while others spring into life out of the warmth of the writer's rancour. The book was entitled, "*L'Angleterre vue à Londres et dans ses provinces pendant un séjour de dix années,*" and among its social illustrations is one in which M. Pillet informs his readers that a Lichfield clergyman, named Proby, had declared from the pulpit that to kill a Frenchman wherever he was to be found was a work very pleasant in the sight of God; and the French author adds that, on some remonstrance being made against this sentiment in presence of the clergyman's wife, Mrs. Proby observed that the phrase was perhaps a little strong, but in order to sustain the public spirit it was indispensable to excite the people to ill-treat and beat the French prisoners of war wherever they were to be met with. This story is mere fiction: the pulpit feeling against France certainly never went to greater excess than in the person of the simple preacher, mentioned in another page, who reminded Heaven of the divine promise to pull down *Mount*

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\* "*Mexico*," by Bruntz Meyer, i. 305.

*Seir*, which he construed as signifying a righteous vengeance against France.

The preacher as ill understood the text as Lady Cork understood the meaning of "charity." One of the most remarkable effects of a charity sermon presents itself in the well-known case of the eccentric and not superlatively honest lady just named. She was seated next to Sidney Smith, and she was so moved by the appeal made by the preacher, that she begged Smith to lend her a guinea to put into the plate. Smith lent her the money, which she put in her pocket, spent next day on herself, and never paid back to the lender—a fine illustration of the charity that begins (and ends) at home.

Preaching had its "business" like playing; and stage directions for actors are not more uncommon than "directions for effect" used to be in the discourses of bygone years.

There are manuscript sermons existing, a couple of centuries old, in the margin of which, "*hem, hem!*" is written, to indicate where the preacher, after raising his strain to a height which should seem to authorize the relief, might cough, merely for the effect of the thing. M. Peugnot states that he had seen in the manuscript sermons of an old preacher, these words in different parts of the margin: "Here, fall back in your seat;" "Start up;" "Use your handkerchief;" "Shout here, like the very devil;" and Balzac says that an old cleric of his time, teaching a young student



how to construct a sermon, confined himself to observing: "Shake the pulpit stoutly; gaze at the crucifix fiercely; say what you can to the purpose; and you'll not preach badly!" The Abbé Boisrobert used to say that a clever preacher ought to know when to cough, spit, or sneeze with effect, as any one of them might be the means of extricating him from a difficulty.

The French pulpit used to be alternately flattering and rude to royalty. It was as often servile to monarchs as some of the preachers of James I.'s reign were to that sovereign. But in France it may be said that the greatest compliments have not been paid by preachers to kings and queens alone. A Cordelier preaching at Bourges in the middle of the seventeenth century, in presence of the archbishop, who was a member of the family de Levi, terminated the exordium in these words: "It would be impossible for me, Monseigneur, to succeed in so fair a design, if I did not make use of the intercession of my lady your cousin, by saying to her, *Ave Maria*." This sort of bad joke was then a century old. We read of a sermon preached at the earlier period, on the day of the Annunciation, which opened in this style: "In name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! I publish the banns of marriage between the very high and very powerful lord, my Lord the Holy Ghost, on the one part, and the very high and very powerful lady, my Lady Mary Levi, on the other." On asking if any

one present forbade the banns, and finding no reply, he exclaimed : " I forbid them, on the part of the world, the flesh, and the devil ! And on these three points, world, flesh, and devil, I ask your attention, in the name of the supremely happy bride, the very holy Virgin. *Ave Maria !*"

Balzac records a notable effect of a sermon preached before the Pope, and a crowd of princes of the church, by the Capuchin Jerome de Varni, who was known to Balzac, by whom he is described as possessing a majestic air, a fine voice, refined language, unexceptionable manners, and great zeal. The sermon was on the duty of prelates residing within their dioceses ; and this he demonstrated with such clearness, that on the morrow, thirty of the bishops who were among his hearers, fled in all haste from Rome, to their respective sees.

Other and perhaps better effects were produced by the greatest of French preachers. After French congregations had slept under Latin discourses, after they had felt stupid under vernacular sermons crammed with much from the classics and little from the scripture, and had become listless under wearisome repetitions of passages from the Fathers, they had a most amazing awakening under the simplicity, force, and earnestness of Massillon. This was exemplified on the first occasion of his preaching his famous sermon on "The small number of the Elect." In the most natural way he conducted the subject, till he suddenly

applied it to the congregation, asking what would be the effect if the Saviour *then* appeared to take his own, and whether a single *one* would be found in that vast congregation. This was done with such quiet yet terrible force, that the majority of hearers half-rose from their seats as if in alarm at the impending peril, and murmurs testifying to the general emotion swelled into a sound which checked the progress of the eloquent speaker himself.

Perhaps a more striking effect was never produced in the pulpit than by the utterance of the single opening phrase of a funeral sermon preached by Massillon, at the obsequies of Louis XIV. That monarch had once said to Massillon, after an Advent sermon at Versailles, and while the preacher was, as yet, only of the Oratory, not yet Bishop of Clermont: "Father, I have heard many great preachers in my chapel, and have been pleased with them, but whenever I hear you, I am displeased with myself." Massillon never flattered the "Grand Monarque," living or dead. At the funeral sermon of Louis le Grand, the preacher, standing erect in the pulpit, slowly looked around at the august assembly, let his eyes rest for a moment on the pomp, circumstance, and ceremony which waited on the sovereign to the very brink of the grave, and even beyond it, gazed downwards for an instant, as if in meditation, and then looking again direct at his audience, said with a grave, firm voice: "*Dieu seul est grand, mes frères !*" Brethren! there

is no one great but God! This exordium alone annihilated the earthly majesty of the king, and made of it but the common dust and ashes of mortality. It indeed, as has been often said, annihilated everything there that was not of God.

The simplicity of a sermon by the celebrated Forsyth, who was a preacher before he was a lawyer, may contrast with the sublimity of that by Massillon. He officiated in his native parish of Biggar, in Scotland, after a severe disease had swept pretty well all the old inhabitants into the neighbouring kirk-yard. Forsyth began with the words: "Our fathers, where are they? We stand where our fathers have stood, and we worship where our fathers have worshipped. We look around us, and behold but the green mounds that cover them." He had scarcely uttered these simple words when all his hearers were overwhelmed by an irrepressible outburst of grief.

The primitive preachers were wont to present their subjects under three points of view, like a certain Member of Parliament, and this was often carried out in the most grotesque manner. One of this very old school, preaching on the beheading of St. John the Baptist, remarked that there were "only three instances of this penalty being applied in Scripture, and these were in the persons of Goliath, Holofernes, and St. John, representing a head on a pike, head in a bag, head in a dish, respectively signifying pride, impurity, and holiness; accordingly, pike, bag, and dish will be

the three points of my sermon, and the object of your serious attention."

Not a few of these old stories about eccentric preachers or sermons are apocryphal; but among eccentric and authentic sermons may well be mentioned that of a Capuchin who surprised Mazarin by preaching in justification of Judas. The son of perdition was represented in this discourse as being treasurer and *maître-d'hôtel* to Jesus Christ, and that being short of funds to provide suitably for the apostles, he thought that delivering his master to the Jews for money would be the best means to recover a good financial position, the more so as he felt assured that his Master would have the power of rescuing himself from the hands of his enemies, since he had escaped out of greater difficulties. Mazarin has recorded the expression of his own amazement at this audacious flight of imagination. It certainly has less to recommend it than the excessive charity of a Scottish preacher, who, after recommending several sorts and conditions of men to the prayers of his congregation, ended with: "An' now, my friends, let us pray for the deil; there's naeboddy more needs praying for than the puir deil!"

As sermon does not follow sermon—except sometimes at camp-meetings and the like—but the preacher has other parts of his vocation to fulfil, let us follow to where church citizenship begins, social life is made glad, and to that necessary end-all, which "will come when it will come."

## FONT, ALTAR, AND GRAVE.

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“ENID” was one among four names which lately I heard given to a bright little baby on her taking up her citizenship in the kingdom of God. She was quite as fair as

. . . . . “that maiden in the tale,  
Whom Gwydion made by glamour out of flow’rs,  
And sweeter than the bride of Cassivelaun,  
Her, for whose love the Roman Cæsar first  
Invaded Britain;

and, as the water from the sacred Jordan fell on her brow, made her bright eyes blink, and rolled like crystal beadlets on her spowy robe, my thoughts went back to one of the ancient customs almost as old as Arthur’s days and Enid’s time. It was one connected with the period that elapsed between the birth of the infant and the churching of the mother, and consisted in the preparation by the latter of a piece of linen cloth called the “chrisom.” If the baby had the good luck to shuffle off its mortal coil and be well rid of life (the very happiest condition of which

is not worth having, loaded as it is with its terrible responsibilities), before the maternal churching, the fortunate infant was buried in the cloth, which was more or less decorated, according to the *status* of the parents. If the mother came to be "churched," full of a grateful and natural joy that her child lived, then she carried the chrisom to church, and she left it there, her gift to the "parson," who simply looked upon it as part of his righteous fee.

In that generally sensible mediæval book by Myrk, "Instructions for Parish Priests," written in the fifteenth century, good encouragement is given to clerical dunces officiating at christenings. They are expressly told that bad Latin will not mar baptism. All that the priest has to take care of is that the *first syllable* of each word be correct. After that, the child will not be the less surely christened for its being done "*in nomina patria et filia spiritus sanctia. Amen.*"

From the earliest period surnames have not been allowed to be used as Christian names in the Roman Catholic church. The more saints' names a child has the greater is the number of protectors he possesses among heaven's hierarchy. The Puritans were quite as particular in prohibiting all Christian names that savoured, as they said, of either paganism or popery. Scriptural names, or Scriptural phrases made up as names, were readily admissible. Thus they had "The-Lord-is-sure" (*Tomkins*, or whatever the surname might be), "More Trial," "Reformation," "Disci-

pline," "Try Again," "Sufficient," "From-Above," "Free-Gifts," "More Fruit," "Dust," and the like. Such names are to be found even on the roll of prelates. That zealous royalist (who, by the way, never allowed a female servant to enter his house), "Accepted" Frewen, was Archbishop of York from 1660 to 1664; and the see of Exeter, from 1708 to 1716, was presided over by "Offspring Blackhall." This style of nomenclature was long maintained in America, where Story found a minister with the significant name of "*Roll-on-God Cotton*." Collier, in his "Church History," illustrates the feeling and the practice in the matter of christening by relating an incident—"How Snape was remarkably scrupulous; for this minister refused to baptize one Christopher Hodkinson's child because he would have it christened Richard. Snape acquainted Hodkinson with his opinion beforehand. He told him he must change the name and look out for one in the Scriptures. But the father, not thinking this fancy would be strongly insisted on, brought his son to church. Snape proceeded in the solemnity till he came to naming the child, but not being able to prevail for any other name than Richard, refused to administer the sacrament, and thus the child was carried away, and afterwards baptized by a conforming clergyman."

In earlier days there were ministers or priests who had more wisdom and charity than Snape. *His* intolerance reminds me of one who was tolerant of all



things except evil. At the period when the Scottish Reformed Presbytery was waging its first war with popery and prelacy, there was a priest in Inverary, named John M'Vicar. This good and tolerant man went over to the Reformation, but he could not persuade his flock, in any great numbers, to accompany him. Neither could John persuade himself to altogether separate from his flock. Accordingly, he entered into a sort of compromise, in order to retain *all* his sheep. To those who clung to the faith in which they were born, he willingly administered the old rites. His baptismal font, still preserved at Inverary, remains an emblem of his practice and his simple charity. It is octagonal in shape, and was divided by the man of two churches into two parts. In one was ordinary water for the use of Protestant infant neophytes; in the other, duly constituted "holy water" for his Catholic lambs. By either process tolerant John made them of Christ's pasture, and that was the one thing needful, he thought, under existing circumstances.

In England it was often rather the people than the preachers who were intolerant. In the very first year of Charles I.'s reign congregations were more or less at issue with their ministers touching a part of the administration of baptism. Some confined themselves to protest, others went further; but none probably went so far as a certain Lady Lawrence, who, like all other dissentients, expressly objected to the use of

the sign of the cross in baptism. The Puritan lady went to her parish church with a child to be christened. The clergyman had got as far as the part where he should sign the newly-made Christian with the sign of the cross. He turned to receive the child in his arms, where Lady Lawrence offered to place it, but in such a position, and with its dress so adjusted, as to be grossly insulting to the disgusted "parson." This was in 1629, when such foolish outrages could be punished, and the insulted minister proceeded against the lady, "who," says Rushworth, "was recommended to the High Commission Court." The objection to the sign was so great that many of the subscribers to the Solemn League and Covenant who could not write their names and had to make their mark, declined to draw the cross, which was the usual attesting sign of incompetent writers. They satisfied their consciences by drawing three-fourths of the superstitious symbol, leaving something like the letter T. Documents in the British Museum afford many instances of this conscientious scruple.

But conscience had little influence on some of the anti-Episcopalians. At this period the Presbyterians of Crawford, in Scotland, had a bad reputation for irreligion and stinginess. This is illustrated by the story that, at a kirk collection, all that was found in the plate after prayer, sermon, and a christening, were two bad shillings and a baby!

This incident is of a comic aspect: there is one

connected with Ireland which is rather of a ferocious quality. In origin, the custom it illustrates is remote, but practically, it had a very long life. It consisted of a singular baptismal observance, which was in vigour as late as two centuries ago. The officiating priest, one would think, could hardly have taken part in it, and it was confined to remote parts of Connaught. The people, on presenting small children to be baptized, reserved (mentally, I suppose), from the sanctification of the rite, the right arms of the infants. With such unholy reserve, it was thought that the boys when they grew up would be able to give a more malignant blow with the unblessed arm. This devilish custom must have been invented when Christianity first sought to make children of grace out of children of wrath. Seventeen hundred years of the better dispensation has not eradicated the fiendish spirit; it still lingers in the expression, when applied to a fighter instead of to a fiddler, "More power to your elbow." The arms unblessed in Irish baptisms are still vigorous in the commission of such murders as that of policeman Brett. Of the cowardly, well-armed rascals who perpetrate the crime, the sympathizers with murderers make saints and heroes. This by the way; I will only add, in reference to another baptismal illustration of a couple of hundred years ago, that the baby's name was always given by the sponsor who was of the same sex. After the ceremony, when a girl was christened, the godfather kissed the god-

mothers before he kissed the mother herself. Otherwise he was obliged to pay a forfeit. Thence came much fun, *although* the custom prevailed among very good company. One of the old forms of baptism does not appear to have been immediately resumed at the Restoration. Pepys, referring to the christening of Catherine, daughter of Lord Sandwich, says that to his and to the trouble of all present, the parson of the parish who performed the ceremony "did not sign the child with the sign of the cross."

Threescore years later, Lord Chesterfield—who, whatever he believed in, can scarcely be said to have believed in Christianity—gave a curious exhibition to the people at the Hague, when he was residing there, in 1728. Writing to Lady Howard, the fine gentleman remarks that he had recently "acquired some degree of reputation" by a circumstance which he proceeds to narrate:—"You must know, then, that last Sunday I treated the people here to an English christening in my chapel, of a black-a-moor boy that I have; having had him first instructed fully in the Christian faith by my chaplain, and examined by myself. The behaviour of the young Christian was decent and exemplary, and he renounced *his likeness* with great devotion, to the infinite edification of a very numerous audience of both sexes. Though I have by these means got the reputation of a very good Christian, yet the more thrifty and frugal people here call my parts and economy a good deal in question for

having put it out of my power ever to sell him." Chesterfield questioning the negro boy on his qualifications for Christianity, must have been a thing to make demondom hilarious!

Chesterfield, preparing his "black-a-moor" for baptism, reminds me of another statesman, Mr. Disraeli, who can attend bridals and take part in stormy debates on one and the same day. Very recently, he entered the House of Commons with a large "wedding favour" pinned on his coat.

The bridal rosettes, which are not yet out of usage, are not, as we are often told, a relic of the custom when the company divided the bride's garter and wore each part as a "favour." The ribands were of old the bride laces, of various materials, according to the condition of the parties, which were distributed among the guests that they might therewith tie the rosemary sprigs which they all carried in their hands to church. After the ceremony the guests, as their humour or fancy prompted, unwound the bride laces, and wore them in their hat, hair, or twisted about the ear—the better to entangle the hearts of those who looked on them.

St. Nicholas used to be prayed to, in England, by young ladies who were puzzled which of any number of suitors to choose. Less lucky ladies who lived near Abbotsbury, and to whom no one came a-wooing, were wont, "once upon a time," to go to the little Norman chapel of St. Catherine, near Milton Abbey, Dorset,


on the saint's anniversary, and there put up the explicit and simple prayer: "A husband, St. Catherine!—a handsome one, St. Catherine!—a rich one, St. Catherine!—a nice one, St. Catherine!—*and soon*, St. Catherine!" Some English brides who attained the dignity of wife wore the symbols of their happy condition during a brief season only. Visitors to St. Alban's Cathedral may remember that among the frailer relics of the past, in that noble church, is a garland which has hung in the south nave there for more than a century. It is said to have been a bridal wreath, and to have been suspended there because the bride who had worn it was wedded in that church and had died within a year of her marriage.

Some of the old provincial marriages were marked, or marred, by what would now be considered an intolerable rudeness. At the same period, when marriages were celebrated at Court, one would expect to find much decorum with the gladness, but rascally *did* sometimes intrude to mar the joy. In the reign of James I., who loved to see such ceremonies from beginning to end, one of the most brilliant marriages celebrated at Whitehall was that of the Lady Susan Vere with Sir Philip Herbert. The year 1604 saw no more brilliant ceremony. Nymphs and swains were in the costliest velvets and satins, and were all a-blaze with diamonds. How it fared with the gentlemen I do not know; but Sir Dudley Carleton has left it on record that many great ladies were made shorter by

the skirts, which were cut away from them, with all their attendant finery.

It is clear, however, that as late as 1697 there was as little sense of propriety in church as at Court touching marriage. There were clergymen of most reprehensible practices with regard to the celebration of the ceremony. For money they would marry any parties at any hour, and without asking any inconvenient questions—neither banns nor licence entering into the matter at all. Dr. Gardiner, Bishop of Lincoln, sternly rebuked this practice in his celebrated charge of that year. The rebuke was not superfluous, for at that time a man might forcibly carry off a young lady, but if he brought gold with him the unworthy priest would take his hire, share the crime, and pronounce the parties man and wife, in spite of the circumstances that rendered the ceremony illegal.

Ministers themselves, albeit priests of Hymen, according to the fashionable slang, found more obstacles in the way of getting married than are now dreamed of. One of the quaintest instances of this fact is afforded us by Serjeant Cowper, of Capel, Surrey, who sent the minister of the parish there to Sir William More, at Losely, with a letter, from which the following are extracts:—"Being without a wife, he is very desirous to marry a maid dwelling in the same parish; and forasmuch as, by her Majesty's injunctions, a minister cannot marry but by examination and licence of the bishop of the diocese and two justices of the




peace, near unto the place where the said minister and woman do dwell, I am for him to desire your assent thereunto. The man is of honest and good conversation, and the woman is of good years, towards thirty, and a very sober maid and honest, and so reported of by the substantialest men of the parish, where she has dwelled almost seven years. He hath the goodwill of her mother, her father being dead, and of her master with whom she last dwelt, and of her friends, and of the parish where he serveth, for I sent for divers of them to have their opinions of the matter, before I would write, and before you signify your assent to my Lord Bishop (unto whom I have also written), by a word or two from you."

No such difficulties confronted secular people, for these were more regardless of the law. In the last century, before the Marriage Act was passed, ladies who wanted a nominal husband to take the responsibility of their debts had no difficulty whatever. At certain chapels, husbands and parsons were in daily attendance. The lady made her choice, paid the man his fee—the parson married them—and the wedded couple never saw one another again. When creditors pressed for "that little account," the lady showed her marriage certificate, pleaded her *coverture*, and left those who had trusted her to find out her lord and master, if they could. Such lords were easily found, but not easily identified. They married daily as many women as wanted husbands for the nonce, and changed



their name each time. The officiating priest, arch rascal, *si oncques fût*, was well aware in what villany he was confederate ; but the knowledge added no taint of bitterness to his punch. He and his friends cried out the more lustily when Parliament made such marriages illegal, and protested against such an infringement on the liberty of the subject.

Present facilities for marriages in America a good deal resemble those of which advantage used to be taken in England. Not long since, at St. Louis, a Roman Catholic priest refused to complete a marriage ceremony which had been interrupted by an Ariadne, who protested that the bridegroom was under promise to marry *her*. The groom and his bride, however, posted off to a justice of the peace, who, for a few dollars and some odd pence, buckled them to their hearts' content. In one of the New England States, the banns used to be published by posting the names at the church entrance. It was found, however, that people came to read the list who did not enter the church. Subsequently the paper of announcement was attached to a pillar within the church, and then certain curious people would mount on chairs to read before they could kneel to pray. The curiosity was stimulated by some of the announcements being written in a hand almost imperceptibly fine, or being affixed upside down. In old Connecticut the banns used to be by outcry before the sermon, but the bit of news led to gossiping and whispering during the




discourse. At last, the publication was made at the close of the afternoon service. For the sake of the information, it was hoped and found that the inquiring public would join in worship, listen to the sermon, and sit out the service. For such perseverance they got their reward.

The old idea that if a bride stands at the wrong side of the bridegroom at the altar the marriage is invalid, is a superstitious idea that has not yet died out. Scarcely a year ago a young woman presented herself to the magistrates at the Mansion House to ask for advice on this point. When married, she had inadvertently stood on the wrong side. She had now received a cheque in her husband's temporary absence, and she hesitated to present it for payment, lest it might give rise to a questioning of the validity of her marriage. The magistrates had great difficulty in calming her fears and quieting her scruples. They told her that "position" was of no consequence if the ceremony was legal in all other respects. The uncertain lady withdrew as one who was not half convinced. It may be that she hoped for judgment in an adverse sense.

While we have ladies who practise as doctors, women who deliver lectures, and wenches who claim all sorts of political privileges, we have not yet found an ordained female parson. America is before us in this respect. Massachusetts has ordained the Rev. Olympia Brown, and the lady, by virtue of her ordination, has proceeded to solemnize marriages. This proceeding has

alarmed some old Conservatives, who do not find the pronoun referring to the officiating minister in the American rubric agreeing with the sex of the fair official who has assumed the duty of priestess of Hymen. The law has been appealed to, and the judges have pronounced that, as the Rev. Olympia was ordained priest, she was ordained to all the duties of the calling. The judges are easily removable in the States, and perhaps they did not dare decide against the admission, to that office of priestess, of the representative of a sex powerful enough to move all the judges on the bench.

Bridal and burial were never more closely connected than in the person of Kate Tudor, of Beren, who died at the close of the sixteenth century; when, as a brilliant young widow, she followed the body of her husband, Sir John Salusbury, of Llewenny, into church, she had as her supporters in that trying hour her gallant neighbours, Sir Richard Clough, of Bachagraig, and Morris Wynne, of Gwydyr. Richard and Morris aspired to the beautiful widow's hand and heart. The knight was vigilant; Morris circumspect. The first impetuous; the second punctilious. As they went into church, Sir Roger whispered loving offer of marriage in Katherine's ear; and she replied to it with a sweet sad smile, which as plainly said "Yes" as if her tongue had uttered it. When the solemnity was over, and the mourners were leaving the churchyard, the decorous Morris whispered




his suit, and was astounded when the lady told him she was engaged by Sir Roger on going into church. But that he might not lose opportunity again, she agreed to marry him if she should have in decent time to bury her second husband. And this happened; indeed, she buried a third, wedded with a fourth, and died a widow after all. The people saluted her with the title of "Mam Cymru," or Mother of Wales.

This story, bringing us from the altar to the churchyard, I will avail myself of it to remark that there was no burying in towns (and then, originally, only in churches) before the period of Cuthbert, Archbishop of Canterbury (740-58), who had seen the fashion of intramural interments in Rome, where it was introduced by Gregory III. (731-41), who was buried in one of the porches of St. Peter's. Cuthbert obtained Papal permission to establish churchyards within English towns and cities. He was the first of the archbishops buried in or near old Canterbury Cathedral.

Cuthbert having been buried close to the cathedral, or rather, the monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul, in Canterbury, the ground soon became a Campo Santo. St. Dunstan used to say that no one could set his foot in the church or the cemetery without treading upon the remains of some saint.

It was probably because of the value attached to the prayers of monks that rich people in the early times preferred being buried in a monastery church to

being so disposed of in a parish church. The monks prayed for the souls of all who were buried within the limits of their house, and great benefits were to be had in the next world (it was thought) from such prayers in this. Sometimes one grave did not get the entire man. The custom of dividing the dead bodies of princely and noble persons continued long after the Reformation. What was at last a mere fashion was founded on a privilege enjoyed, but no one can say how acquired, by monasteries. Thus when a potential lord or lady died, the body went to one monastery, the heart to another, the bowels to a third. As the more names a man possessed the more saints, his namesakes, he had to protect him, so the wider his remains were scattered, the more prayers were put up for his soul—that mysterious spark of life by which the body was once animated. Of course this dividing, especially of royal bodies, brought prestige and profit to a monastery. “The friars of all orders,” says Walsingham, “challenged part of the bodies of all great persons dying, like greedy hounds, each snatching for a piece of a dead body.” This custom, moreover, was an infraction of the canon law, whereby the dividing and disembowelling of bodies, and the burying any part elsewhere than where death occurred, brought down the greater excommunication of the church on all parties concerned therein. The bodies of persons so excommunicated are supposed to be incapable of returning to dust. It was from no such graves as




theirs that doctors could procure the *halinitrum* which even in London, in Boyle's time, the best practitioners used to administer to their patients. Other tombs furnished other specifics. For instance, about the time of the Reformation, a man of religious life was buried in the church of St. Hilary, at Poitiers, with an epitaph on his tomb, commencing in these words, "Vermibus hic ponor." This inscription only implied that he was there for the good of the worms; but the poor Poictevins jumped to the conclusion that the holy man undertook to cure them in children, and they scraped his tomb and administered the powder thus obtained, as a specific. The error spread, and the remedy was pronounced genuine. There would not have been much of the tomb left had not the authorities, in order to preserve it, set up a wooden barrier to keep the crowd at a distance. The enlightened public, however, would *not* be persuaded out of their error. As they could not scrape the stone, they chipped the wood, which they reduced to powder, and gave to the afflicted. Irreverent persons might say that it did them a deal of good.

Cypress boughs at funerals, carried by the sad escort of the cypress-coffined defunct, are no longer to be seen in England. Fuller describes the first as a symbol of death. The cypress, once cut down, never sprouts again: so the dead never revive. The cypress coffin was a memorial of the Deluge, when mankind was buried alive for a time within the cypress

ark. At another time English graves used in some localities to be strewn with sage. This too was an emblem—of immortality—according to the monkish “saw,” which says that there is no reason why a man should die if he has *sage* in his garden. Wisdom bringeth eternal life.

Among the oldest of churchyard trees now surviving, I reckon those at Stone, in Kent, and at (White’s) Selborne, in Surrey. The old yew trees helped to furnish bows for the English archers. An Act of Edward I. prohibits any incumbent from cutting down trees in churchyards. This led in later times to *lawning* cemeteries on the part of incumbents, who would not plant since they might not cut down. In exposed districts this want of trees has been injurious to the churches. The old churchyard yews furnished weapons to our soldiers, and armour for the churches themselves against tempests.

The first example of a violation of English churchyards by a “resurrectionist” occurred not till the reign of James I. The fellow opened four graves in Leicester, stole the winding-sheets from the bodies of three men and a woman, re-buried them, and went his way. Later he was captured. His crime excited universal horror, and all the judges who met to decide what steps could be taken described the crime as “*Furtum inauditum*,” or felony never heard of hitherto. He was tried, and he would have suffered death only that he “had his clergy allowed him,” and he got off



with a whipping and being burnt in the hand. Such were the crime and penalty of the proto-resurrectionist, William Haynes.

Two centuries before Haynes's time, there was a Bishop of London who reappeared nearly half a century after Haynes was whipped. This prelate was Robert de Braybroke, who was bishop of the above see from 1381 to 1404. Robert, during one early year of his episcopacy, was also Chancellor of England. He lived in a princely style, but he used his power as chancellor to satisfy his cruelty as bishop. He got a bill passed through the Lords which had been rejected by the Commons, for the punishment of all persons who should be returned to the Court of Chancery by certain commissioners as heretics. Among the latter were to be included all who denied that holy images were fit objects of veneration. The Commons were furious; they annulled the oppressive Act, the Lords consenting, but De Braybroke contrived that the nullification should remain a dead letter.

This bishop lived sumptuously, and was buried magnificently; but I wish to speak of his style, if I may so speak, two centuries and a half after death. When the Great Fire swept round and through St. Paul's, where he was buried, the flames split his tomb into fragments, and his body rolled out into the church of St. Faith beneath. The death clothes were consumed, but his skeleton, covered by a tough, leathery, dry, spongy flesh, remained intact. It was removed into



the Convocation House yard, where it lay, the head all atwist, a matter of interest, amusement, or contempt, to the numbers who flocked to gaze on this solitary object in the midst of the smoking ruins of the city. The skeleton of him who had ridden in stately fashion by the side of his friend, great John of Gaunt, was handled and derided by the Cockneys in the days of Bishop Henchman.

There was at that time no great respect paid, even in high places, for the relics of the once living. Perhaps some of the Old Church who lovingly venerated the remains of a bishop, or who sternly respected a prelate who would have burnt heretics with the utmost alacrity, may have picked up an odd bone or two and enshrined it in their houses. Sheldon was then Archbishop of Canterbury, and he had no decent reverence for the dead. The body of one of Sheldon's great predecessors, the Cardinal Archbishop Morton, was buried in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral. Not fire, but time and hard weather, split up the tomb, and pious people and curiosity seekers used to go and purloin bones and little bits of bone until nothing was left but the head, which perhaps could not be so easily got at as the rest. A country kinsman and namesake of careless Sheldon asked for this last relic, which should have been reverently hidden out of sight. Sheldon gave his ready consent, and his kinsman Ralph carried it with him into Worcestershire. He kept the "choice relique" in a leaden box, and probably

exhibited it on company days to the Wigornian squires, the Lady Wrongheads, and the Miss Jennies. The Jacobite antiquary and biographer saw it, if I remember rightly, towards the end of the seventeenth century. Whether old Bishop Skinner saw it or not I am unable to say; but it would not ill-become the present bishop, or any one in his diocese, to inquire what may have become of the skull of the primate who brought in the Tudors, and did far better service when he made the cut in the Bedford Level, which went by the name of "Morton's Leame."

In much later times than the above, there were old funeral customs in use that shock one as much as the idea of the violation of the grave. In Cornwall, some barbarous ceremonies attendant on funerals were joyously observed down to the end of the last century. The corpse being buried at noon, a hundred persons (if the defunct had died "well-to-do") sat down to dinner at the neighbouring inn, at two. The clergyman played a prominent part on these occasions, for though the chief mourner took the chair, by right of his office, the "parson" was always seated at his right hand. Mr. Buckingham, in his autobiography, describes a funeral festival of the above character and time, at which the widow of the deceased man sat on the left of his nearest blood relation in the chair, in full mourning weeds. The guests, on taking their seats, whetted their appetites with a little brandy. They should not have done this till grace had been said by

the clergyman ; but some, not standing on ceremony, did not wait, but swallowed their " whet " before the parson had opened his mouth to " ask a blessing." At every change of dishes a little more brandy was consumed, for digestion's sake. Therewith, the eating was voracious, and the consumption of tavern wine tremendous. The cloth being drawn, wine, rum, gin, and brandy, hot water, pipes, tobacco, and lighted candles were placed on the tables, to render life tolerable to the mourners, who applied the solace with such alacrity that they were half-drunk in a moderate space of time. At this hilarious moment the widow and her ladies withdrew. The gentlemen, left to themselves, and to manifest a pious spirit, sent for the parish choir, who sung anthems, choruses\* to which were improvised by such of the mourners as had any voice left, with glass in one hand and a pipe in the other. Having thus satisfied all delicate scruples, they fell to roaring patriotic songs (and a wide variety of songs was included under that name), which amusement, with hard drinking, was kept up till after midnight. There is no record of when the clergyman disappeared from the funeral orgie. Let us hope that he was not among those who " were found at daylight, drunk and insensible beneath the table," and of whom it may be said as of the laughers at a funeral " breakfast," that they were only dissembling their grief.

Eccentricities accompanied the barbarities of the olden time. Among the chief of the eccentrics may

be mentioned the Sussex miller who was buried on his head, that as the world was to be turned "topsy-turvy," he might come all right at the proper moment. A more singular burial is recorded in the Lymington register, 1736. "Samuel Baldwin, Esq., sojourner in this parish, was immersed without the Needles, *sans cérémonie*, May 20." This immersion was in obedience to the expressed will of the defunct, and in order to disappoint his amiable lady, who in domestic quarrels used to aggravate Samuel by assuring him that, if she ever became his widow, her greatest pleasure would be to dance upon his grave!

There was a more quaint tenderness of eccentricity manifested by a man who desired to have with him in the grave what had been dearest to him in the world. This was the famous medical knight, Sir William Brown, who died in Queen's-square, Westminster, in 1770. There went with him in his coffin to the grave, what he called in his will (in accordance with which it was not separated from him in death) "the pleasant and useful companion of my Way and Life," his pocket Elzevir Horace, "worn out with and by me." Some such custom was in use with the Jewish Rabbis in Amsterdam. Evelyn has recorded how, peeping into a tomb there, he saw various books lying about a corse, and how, with the help of a stick, he raked out some of the leaves, on which he found Hebrew characters much impaired! Here was an Englishman who did not understand the holiness of

that place. But it may have been mere thoughtlessness. There may too be excess of respect which becomes caricature, like that of M. Brunoi, mentioned by Prudhomme, who on his mother's death put his park into mourning, and poured hogsheads of ink brought from Paris into his reservoir, that his fountains might play only sable jets, in sorrow for the mother of so foolish a son !

Old customs linger long. The Scythians on burying a chief, used to slay his favourite horse and bury it with its master. As late as 1781, this ceremony was observed at the funeral (at Treves) of General Kasimir. The led horse at a cavalry soldier's funeral is what still remains of the old performance. The breaking of the official staff, by herald or chamberlain, at the burial of august personages, is another relic of an old funeral custom. The master of the ceremonies at the last rites where a dead Greek Emperor was to be conveyed from the palace to the tomb, opened the proceedings by announcing that the King of king demanded the Emperor's presence, and that it was time for him to set out. At the tomb, as the emperor could not return, the official broke his wand in token that his service was at an end. Something akin to this still exists in Italy. When the late Prince Rospigliosi was borne from his state carriage to the *estrada* in the church of San Francesco a Ripa, and the service was over, his head cook, in quaint costume, advanced on tiptoe, bowed to his dead master, and

asked, with solemn smile, "Has your excellency any orders for me this morning?" A pause ensued, no answer came, the head cook listened as the mourners withdrew to their carriages, and then he proceeded to the porch, and exclaimed to the Jehus, "Home! his excellency has no further orders for anybody!"

One of the most singular incidents connected with the grave, is also the most recent. It refers to the Jews at Orleans. The Rabbi there has opposed the Government design of disturbing a Jewish cemetery for the sake of making a new road. The High Priest maintains that if the bodies are disarranged there will be deplorable confusion on the Day of Judgment. "If you separate and lose any of the bones," he asks, "how is the Resurrection to be completed?" The disputes that will arise on the Last Day distress the poor Rabbi only to think of them. The authorities promised to make things as smooth as possible, so that the Orleans Jews should get themselves together at the final trump without being disagreeable to their neighbours.

I have said that social life is made bright by the exercise of one of the three functions illustrated in this chapter. How irregularly that function was sometimes exercised we shall see in the next.

## IRREGULAR MARRIAGES.

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THE ladies owe a debt of gratitude to Pope Innocent III. (1198–1216). He had the insolence to excommunicate King John, but he had a heart that was not hardened against gentle sentiments. In his time, although there was a religious celebration of marriage, a lover occasionally went as of old to his lady's house, took her by the hand, led her to his own, and all the neighbourhood knew thereby that they were man and wife. There was no other ceremony. The church entered not into the thoughts of the happy pair!

Anglo-Saxon brides, however, grew a little uneasy at this uncereemonious way of concluding a solemn contract; but even they did not think of going to church for a religious completion of the matter. They did the next best thing, they had a priest to come and bless them at home—that is to say, at the bridegroom's home, whither the bride was first carried as before. It was a "private celebration," something like that which may still take place by special archiepiscopal licence in any house at any hour. The

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principle of the two ceremonies probably somewhat differed.

The Anglo-Saxons, when fully christianized, soon learnt, instead of having the priest to bless their marriages at home, to stand before him at "the altar." Thenceforward there was no marriage valid but such as was made in face of the Church, except special licence gave exemption from the law. "Thenceforward," however, has a limited sense. In the Commonwealth times, justices of the peace were the only priests of Hymen according to law, and the legality of the marriages they celebrated was subsequently confirmed by Act of Parliament. The old law was not put in strict force. Marriages were performed otherwise than in face of the Church. They were irregular, but not invalid. The priest celebrating them was, it is supposed, punishable; but his work was unimpeached. The Fleet Prison, May Fair, the Savoy Precincts, were places where couples could be wedded at any hour. To such circumstance the first Marriage Act (1754) put great check, if not a final stop. The law gently constrained lovers to repair to church and be publicly married. This law was changed by that of William IV., by which wedding couples might go either to church or to the registrar's-office, at their option. In France, such parties *must* go before the civil authorities. If they choose afterwards to be married at church, it is considered a mere matter of religious sentiment, which does not make the parties



more or less married than they were before. In short, the civil marriage is the only legal one in France. Under our "glorious constitution," the registrar's parlour or the more seemly church is optional.

I think that the Knights Templars were the progenitors of the Fleet parsons. There was a sacred side to their chivalry, and by virtue thereof they married persons who had interest in avoiding the regular priest, or who were unable to find one. Captains of vessels retain this Templar privilege, if that can be called a privilege which was at least much contested. The Templars themselves seem to have infringed the privileges of other bodies in fashionable localities. Old Trinity Priory church, in the Minories, had a certain sort of popularity in its day, if not of fashion. Being exempt from episcopal jurisdiction, this church possessed the privilege of celebrating marriages without licence. The church was founded by Queen Matilda, A.D. 1108. That lady had had difficulties in some of her own love passages. Even her marriage with Henry I. was not effected without triple licence. It had the consent of the clergy and the sanction of the pope; but when the knot was about to be tied at Westminster, Archbishop Anselm, remembering that the bride had once been more than half a nun, turned to the people and asked if they were satisfied that the lady was free to marry? The sympathizing folk set up a "hurrah!" and declared that it was rightly settled so, and then the

matter was completed. It may have been that Matilda was resolved that there should be one place in London where lovers might be united without any questions asked. Accordingly this popular church in the Little Minories served the purpose of haply too eager maids and wooers before the reverend rascality of the Fleet was known, or the irreverend blacksmith had turned his anvil into an altar at Gretna Green.

When Elliot, rector of St. James's, Duke's-place, occupying part of the site of the priory, was suspended, in 1616, marriages without banns or licences were supposed to have ceased. This is not the case. At that time, however, there were several clerical prisoners in the Fleet, where indeed it was not uncommon to find men in durance, for marrying ladies without their fathers' knowledge. Among such are the names of Keys, who married Mary, sister of Lady Jane Grey, and Dr. Donne, for marrying Sir George Moore's daughter. The clergymen in the Fleet limbo, for the most part, had neither means nor character. They had already lost their liberty, and had nothing more to lose. They assumed the privileges which had been granted to better men, and they commenced their nefarious practice at the taverns in the liberties, within which they resided. For nearly a hundred and forty years these reverend villains and their successors kept their ground and made profit by their villany.

The Fleet parson was not always in orders. When

the rascal had that advantage, his card and signboard intimated that he performed marriages "without imposition." If he was not in orders, the irreverend villain announced the exercise of his office "by authority." He had purchased it for a thousand pounds of the Chancellor; or it had been conferred on him because of his merits by the Lord Mayor! Most if not all of the unordained were prisoners for debt. Of the ordained, some were in detention, others not. They who were free glorified themselves on their respectability, and warned the marrying public that no Fleet marriage performed by a parson who was a prisoner, was valid. This was a lie, but it served the utterer's purpose. Rarely, indeed, can the finger rest on one of those rascals who had a rag of honest shame hanging about him. Wyatt, who was in the Fleet prison or precincts from 1713 to 1750, and who made about sixty pounds a month by solemnizing clandestine marriages, was perhaps one of those who was a little shy of the work by which he lived. In his pocket-book, in which he, like his colleagues, made registry of his day's performances before he entered them into the hymeneal ledger at night, there is now and then a pious reflection—an expression of distaste at the alternative between profitable Fleet celebrations and starvation; a note of disgust at the couples who came to him to be buckled together; and an almost comic self-condemnation at the way in which he has to endorse the lies uttered, with oaths to help them, of his plyers.


Even Doctor Gaynam, who was popularly known as "the Bishop of Hell," on being once asked by the Judge before whom he was giving evidence of the celebration of a marriage, how he could follow such a disreputable life, had the feeling or the audacity to say, "*Video meliora, deteriora sequor.*" The Judge told the fellow who thus aired the little learning he had left, that a highwayman was a less offensive member of society than he, and such as he. Such reproof little affected the "Bishop of Hell." He not only contracted parties clandestinely, but for five shillings would issue a certificate (required for some felonious purpose), to the effect that he had married a certain couple whom he had never seen, and who had never seen each other!

In or out of orders, there was not much difference in the celebrants. At a very early period a Scottish bishop, then in England, greatly comforted the more rascally portion of impostors by ordaining any who came to him for that purpose. This was Sydserf, Bishop of Galloway; and among those on whom he laid his episcopal hands was one Roundtree, a mechanic; "a simple mechanic," Pepys calls him in 1661, "who was a parson formerly of the Fleet."

The noble editor of Pepys's "Diary" concludes that Roundtree was a Fleet parson; but he may have been a naval chaplain. The two callings were, however, compatible. One of the most noted of this clerical creed was Lando, "chaplain of H.M.S. *Falkland*"

from 1744 to 1746, after he had been, for the previous six years, a Fleet parson and something more. That is to say, he married clandestinely on Sundays, Tuesdays, and Saturdays, the more fashionable days, and gave lessons in Latin and French during the slack hours of the remainder of the week. He had been in the navy before he entered the Fleet. His prospectus told how he had fought for his king and country, was a gentleman above little mean acts, and how cosily and indissolubly he could marry couples of all ages in "St. John's Chapel," as he called the room in a public house, "next door to the china-shop in Half-moon-court." It was Lando's great boast that his "chapel" was "not on the verge of the Fleet," and that he was not to be confounded with the ragamuffin divines of the locality.

But Lando was not the only Fleet parson who "performed marriages" outside as well as inside the verge and liberties of the prison. There was the Rev. James Colter in Leather-lane, as well as of the Fleet. He married people in the lane, or in or about the prison—in short, anywhere, near or far. He had been turned out of an Essex living by the Bishop of London, and was ready to attend to a call for his services in any part of England. Flood (1709–29), who had a mistress in the prison and a wife out of it, was another of the roving espousers. He was a prisoner for debt, but the "Doctor" could easily obtain a rule, and he solemnized weddings in the Fleet, King's Bench, and



the Mint. Often a tipsy couple, or a tipsy rake and a wide-awake nymph, would send from Farrell's bagnio in Long-acre to the Fleet for a parson to wed them, just after midnight. Time was all one to such a minister, for he kept the clock in his "chapel" always fixed at one hour, a canonical one, and the scrupulous man knew of no other hour when called upon to exercise his office. So, though he might swear an oath or two, he would hurry off to Farrell's or the "World's End," perform his "duty," help to get rid of any amount of punch in honour of the event, and make record of the whole performance in his "true register" when he got back to the Fleet, if he was not too drunk to remember it.

For those good men loved generous liquor. They *so* loved it that the more thirsty of them, when they could exact no better fee from the wretched couple who came to be married, would "do it" for a quartern of brandy before and after the ceremony. Nay, some would undermarry their clerical brethren, by taking a drain of gin and a roll of tobacco.

These were the parsons who, swearing themselves, affected to be shocked when sworn *at*. In the latter case they would avenge themselves by omitting a material part of the service, and feel delighted at having prevented the ruffianly swain from having made an honest woman of the wench whom he had brought for that purpose to the foot of the tavern altar which he had desecrated. But those good men, again, occa-

sionally suffered, not merely in their conscience, but after a more material fashion. Sacrilegious wretches would not scruple to pick the pockets of these holy ministers of the fees just deposited there. Often the parson had the money taken from him by open violence. If a silver spoon lay about, it was pretty sure to be abstracted.

On the other hand, the parsons were not without offence on their side. They would sometimes go too far in making warm love to the bride's mother. They have even been known to handsomely thrash the bridegroom, and thereby become acceptable to the damsel who was the prize of victory! They were great in gallantry and blasphemy. Parson Ashwell married so many people in his time, that he fell into the habit of having more wives of his own than the law considers necessary in this Christian country. With excessive gallantry there was stupendous blasphemy; but the pleasantest vices were turned into sharp scourges. If a swearing parson and his touter quarrelled, the latter would find profitable vengeance by laying an information against his ex-patron or ex-colleague for swearing. Forty oaths in a day, at two shillings (fine) each, brought a pleasant sum total to the pocket of a plyer who could thus punish an incautious patron.

Subject to much persecution of another quality were these poor Fleet parsons. To parties who came unprovided with the symbolic ring, such articles were

lent for the nonce ; but a stalwart bride was as likely to run off with the bit of gold as the stalwart or sly bridegroom was with the "plate," if a spoon were visible. The Fleet parson must have felt the holiness of the occasion slightly outraged when a bridegroom, half drunk, half afraid, conscious of something wrong, and wildly defying, was brought, "will he nill he," to be married, and who swore the while that he would murder any fellow that tried to do it !


Some of those "fellows" almost deserved to be so treated. One of the worst of the "regulars" was Dr. Dare, who kept a curate, married his two hundred couple a month, and forged certificates for those who did not want to be married, but who wished to pass for being so, to suit some temporary purpose. Occasionally one of the brotherhood, overstepping all licence, got into difficulties with the Ecclesiastical Court. Mottram was one of these ; and his gains may be guessed at by his power to pay a fine of 200*l.*, and endure suspense for a couple of years. Perhaps, like a fellow-parson, Wigmore, he passed his time in drinking, and selling spirituous drinks to others. Many of them, however, could afford to live well ; and their practice did not obstruct their preferment. Dr. Alley, at least, in the early part of last century, gave up marrying in the Fleet for a better field of labour, to which he seems to have been appointed out of it. Alley may have had some ray of propriety about him ; but his colleagues more closely resembled



Nehemiah Rogers, who was an arch-rascal, fierce drinker, awful swearer, and with such a turn for gallantry as to be the model for all the parsons who made love to the brides, and thrashed the bridegrooms who seemed not to like it. The parsons were often terribly mauled on these occasions.

The best of them affected a respectability which was profitable to them. Symson, who was, like Lilley and Ashwell, a "great operator of marriages," and was among the last of his race, operating from 1731 to 1754, invited loving couples to "the true Chapel at the *Old Hand and Mitre*," with the seductive assurance that he was "educated at the University of Cambridge," and "late Chaplain to the Earl of Rothes." The university education of others was manifested in a certain droll sort of scholarship. They made comments in their registry, in English words but in Greek letters! One of these describes the bridesmaids at a wedding, just over, by a name, which was as offensive as possible, even to those to whom it was applicable. But, in Greek letters, the word looked pretty enough.

The unordained rascality of the Fleet seem to have considered that they had as good right to help in making honest women and happy couples as the more regular ministry. These probably touted in clerical garb for customers, and had an outcast "reverend" at hand, in a tavern chapel, to tie the couples duly together. Such a fellow was "the Reverend Mr.



Crawford," who for a quarter of a century (1723-48) was a well-known Fleet chaplain. He was a watch-maker, but he was to be seen abroad in clerical coat; or, if at home, in a flowered morning gown, with bands, hat, and wig, that would have done credit to a prelate. These fellows, I presume by deputy, occasionally married people of quality. One of them recorded in his registry-book that a "barrownight came with them"—with the couple he had married. These genuine deputies were not so fashionably got up as their principals. In default of a surplice, they wore a nightshirt over their ordinary dress—an arrangement which tended to produce much delicate comment among the nice creatures there assembled. Their audacity was on a par with the delicacy, for they sometimes administered the sacrament; or, in place thereof, more or less solemnly broke a biscuit over the head of the bride.

Hymen is not so blind as his brother, but a blind marrying parson was found of use in the Fleet. There was one there during many years, whose name was Shadwell. Other parsons *might* refuse to marry parties who were minors. Shadwell could not see what they were; he married boys and girls, without question. Among his performances was that of marrying a boy, who sold fruit on Fleet-bridge, to a woman who hired the boy to pass for a man for half a guinea. The "wife" thus obtained the protection claimed by married women against creditors; and if these dis-

covered the "husband," the blind parson was unable to identify him! The unordained marryers were now and then fluttered in their dovecote, by an episcopal command to show their letters of ordination. They fled from the precincts for a day, or lay in their tavern chapels till the storm blew over and halcyon times returned.

As long as the good time endured, parties went to the Fleet to be married. In the earlier days, from 1613 to 1674, honourable open marriage was celebrated in the Fleet by the duly-appointed chaplain. He had a small stipend, the marriage fees, and fourpence a week from every prisoner on entering. After the latter date marriages began to be celebrated clandestinely. This practice was prohibited by the ecclesiastical authorities, and the strange result was that for one marriage clandestinely contracted before, there were now a hundred, not only in the Fleet, but over the country. The warden of the Fleet kept the mere Fleet parson from the prison chapel. This led to the opening of rooms in the taverns in and about the precincts. The rooms were called *chapels* by the innkeepers, parsons, and touters; by the profane they were designated as marrying shops.

Thither tending, or in that direction wending, with or without set purpose of marriage, people were obstructed on Ludgate-hill by the plyers, to "come and be married." The roughest touters were the coalheavers, the most insinuating, the widows of Fleet

parsons. Couples having no bowers of their own wherein to begin home and home life could be accommodated in the Fleet, after marriage, for any length of time, from an hour to "for ever," if they required it. Now and then, a bold hussy, dressed as a young fellow, would lead a pert wench by the hand, and get married in the Fleet, for a joke. As they duly paid for it, the parson laughed as loud as they when he gave them their certificate. The reverend gentleman was not more concerned when he tied a frightened and an abducted heiress, delivering her to some villanous fortune-hunter who had her within his grasp, and would not let her go. Some were driven to the Fleet altar by conscientious scruples, like the Quakeress who ran away with an unorthodox swain, and who declined to be bound to him in a "steeple house." Those unions which are said to be of the especial concoction of the devil, of a very old woman with a very young lad, were not uncommon. Eccentric couples would stop the ceremony when only half completed, pay half fees, and affirm that they were married enough! At other times, a forlorn nymph would find herself alone at the trysting-place, her swain having proved false; but the Fleet could supply what lacked, and there was a husband ready for her, if she approved of him. Some couples, of the "larking" order, would refuse to give their names, and demand to be spliced anonymously! Now and again, a lass would run across Ludgate-hill, nothing on but

her shift, and bounce into the tavern chapel, satisfied that by such a proceeding she had cleared her future husband from all liability to pay her debts. Many of these swains had not wherewith to pay even their fees. Now, one lover not having a crown about him, was obliged to leave his snuff-box. Anon, an equally poor votary of Hymen deposited, in lieu of cash, his pocket-handkerchief and a pair of silver sleeve-buttons. Once only can I discover a Fleet parson foregoing his fees and declining to marry a couple. It was when he recognised in the gentleman the son of a friend who had been with him at Oxford. The fellow was, probably, better paid by the father for not marrying, than he would have been by the son, even if he had married him to perhaps one of those questionable creatures whom a Fleet parson did not hesitate to describe in his registry as "widow and ——," what Othello called his Desdemona.

When Queen Anne's Government tried to stop the practice of clandestine marriage, it was not on the ground of morality, but that the Church was defrauded of its dues. The ecclesiastical law excommunicated *all* who were present. The celebrant was declared *liable* to a fine of 200*l.*; the contracting parties to a *mulct* of 100*l.* A small fee, however, purchased *absolution*; and some of the Fleet parsons went *on* making by these marriages 500*l.* a-year. For, *despite* the Ecclesiastical Courts, these unions were *valid* if they could be proved; but no Fleet proof

was good without corroborative testimony from purer sources.

Neither the registries nor the certificates were worth a groat as evidence. A Fleet parson would enter anything: no lie or subterfuge was too gross for him. There were wide spaces in his calendar in which he could enter marriages of *any* parties as having taken place at any period that might be required, and many might be ready to pay for a certificate of such entry, for some hostile purpose. Innocence had no protection: the Fleet might help any villain to his dark design.

When Beau Fielding, supping with Mrs. Wadsworth—an adventuress who passed herself off on the Beau as the wealthy Widow Deleau—got the lady's consent to go for a priest, who should come and marry them at once, the swain did not go so far as the Fleet: he simply knocked at the door of the German Imperial Ambassador, whose Irish chaplain accompanied Fielding to his lodgings, where he buckled the nymph and the beau in a way, he said, which defied undoing. Not long after, the fashionable rascal took the old Duchess of Cleveland to wife, and Fielding beat both the ladies. The duchess offered the first spouse 200*l.* down, and 100*l.* a year for fifteen years, if she would establish the first marriage; thereupon the beau was indicted for bigamy. On this occasion he *did* go to the Fleet, whence he brought with him a certificate of a marriage between one Brady and Mrs. Wadsworth previous to her marriage with Fielding, at which time

Brady was said to be alive. But this was one of those certificates which could be had for a few shillings. Corroborative evidence failing, it was of no avail, and Fielding was found guilty of bigamy, but by favour of Queen Anne escaped the punishment he merited.

In the early years of George I.'s reign, a favourite and fashionable chapel for parties to get privately and pleasantly married at was Sion Chapel, Hampstead. There was a good tavern in the neighbouring gardens, the host of which kept the minister. Boniface announced to persons about to marry that, if they took their wedding dinner at his house, the amount of the marriage fees would be deducted from the bill. These were not excessive, since he also announced that those who bought a licence to be married, and came to the chapel, but did not "keep the wedding" at his house in the gardens, might be coupled for five shillings, "for all fees."

One of the strangest samples of character, and of the looseness of the law with respect to the celebration of marriage, is chronicled in Mrs. Delany's memorials. It shows that it was as easy to get married in a country town as in the Fleet, the Mint, Mayfair, or the Savoy. The date of the story is 1739, and the story itself is to this effect:—

A young lady, in a handsome equipage, drove up to an inn in Birmingham. She entered, summoned the landlord, and ordered a husband. In other words, "she desired the landlord of the inn to get her a hus-

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band, being determined to marry somebody or another before she left the town." Boniface, disposed to take the matter as a joke, was made to understand that it was downright earnest, and as he did not keep such articles in stock, he had to look about the town for "a man that would marry a fine lady without asking questions." The thing was not to be had for the asking for. Even ill-conditioned young fellows, fearful of peril, turned away from the temptation of obtaining a "Bromwicham wife." At last the innkeeper opened a negotiation with a melancholy exciseman, who, after looking the thing in the face for a moment, philosophically remarked, "I can't be in a worse condition than I am now," and consented to bestow his hand and take the lady's. Mine host introduced the parties, and the lady accepted the exciseman without hesitation. We are then told that "she immediately went with him to one who gave them a licence, and made them man and wife." The "wife" then made the melancholy exciseman joyful by giving him a couple of hundred pounds for his trouble. The rest of the story is no less extraordinary than what has been told. Having placed the money in the exciseman's hands, the lady entered her carriage and quitted the town, leaving her "bridegroom to find out who she was, and unriddle this strange adventure. Soon after she was gone two gentlemen came into the town in full pursuit of her. They had traced her so far upon the road, and, finding the inn at which she had put up,



they examined into all the particulars of her conduct, and hearing she *was married*, gave over the pursuit and returned back. . . . 'Tis supposed the young lady, in a desperate fit for fear of being married where she did not like, chose this unaccountable way of preventing it."

How such marriages—in or out of the Fleet or anywhere else—could have been accomplished at all, or how they could be sustained, is explained by the condition of the old Canon Law which then prevailed. By this law, to use Lord Chancellor Campbell's words, "a valid marriage was constituted either by consent of the parties, or by the presence of a priest in orders, at any time or place, without the sanction of parents or guardians, although one or both of the parties might be under age, and without any registration or public act affording the means of knowing whether such a marriage had been contracted."

Lord Hardwicke's Bill did not remedy all the evils which had crept in under the Canon Law, which is still in force with respect to marriage in Scotland. The defects in the Bill may be perused elsewhere. The Bill itself, which rendered clandestine marriages impossible in England, was furiously opposed. In Parliament it was called an aristocratic bill, leading to vice, immorality, the depopulating, and therefore the destruction of the nation. From the venal pen of Dr. Shebbeare flowed a satirical novel, called "The Marriage Act," in which the ruin of female honour,



the contempt of the clergy, the destruction of public and private liberty, with other fatal consequences, are considered in a series of interesting adventures.

It is said that while Lord Hardwicke's Bill was in progress the number of Fleet marriages increased ; but they were wonderfully frequent in the earlier part of the century. Between the 19th of October, 1704, and the 12th of February, 1705, nearly 3000 couples were joined together by the Fleet parsons. The day before Lord Hardwicke's Bill became law—a bill which rendered void all marriages not performed by clergymen in church or chapel, by banns or licence (unless by special licence elsewhere), and which subjected the clergyman celebrating illicit marriages to transportation for fourteen years—(25th March, 1754), 217 marriages were celebrated in the Fleet ; and with this grand finale the prison torch of Hymen was buried in the Fleet Ditch for ever ! People cried *shame* on the act.

The Savoy, however, being a Royal Chapel, was supposed by its incumbent to be free from episcopal and civil jurisdiction in church matters. The minister accordingly advertised that he married people “by authority,” and that marriages were “performed by him with the utmost privacy, decency, and regularity, in the ancient Royal Chapel of St. John the Baptist, in the Savoy, where regular and authentic registers have been kept from the time of the Reformation (being two hundred years and upwards) to this day.

The expense not more than one guinea, the five-shilling stamp included. There are five private ways by land to this chapel, and two by water." Seven roads by which parties could go to be privately married were additional facilities to secrecy, for the "parties" could go by one path and return by the other!

The Rev. Dr. John Wilkinson, one of George II.'s chaplains, the minister of the Savoy Chapel, felt as aggrieved as Keith, in Mayfair, at the Act of 1754, which rendered irregular marriages invalid. He continued to perform them by virtue of his own licence; but happening to couple a lady in whom Garrick was interested, with a gentleman, the player took offence, Dr. Wilkinson was prosecuted, and the law awarded him transportation. His once famous son, Tate, took to the stage; and Garrick, having ruined the father, did his best, by advice and instruction, to buckle fortune on the back of the son.

One of the most famous marriages "solemnized" at Keith's chapel was that of the Duke of Hamilton with the younger of the renowned Irish beauties, Miss Gunning. Privacy was not a matter that either party cared for. They might have been married at St. George's had they been so minded. Sudden, passionate caprice was the sole cause. The battered duke had fallen in love with the brilliant beauty at a masquerade. Like an enamoured Spanish grandee (who is allowed to wear his hat in presence of his

sovereign when the grandee is in love, and is therefore supposed to have no thought for anything but his mistress), the duke forgot all the world, even what was trumps, except the lady. Their marriage had been fixed to "come off" in a few months after the masquerade; but one night when the lovers were alone together he declared that he must be married that very hour, then and there, and the lady, nothing loth, consented that a parson should be sent for. It was not difficult in those days to find a Doctor of Divinity ready to perform "the job" for a guinea or two, and a dignitary thus qualified soon appeared to give the duke and lady a taste of his office. But he found that they had no licence, and that neither of them possessed a ring. He had self-respect or fear enough not to stoop to perform an irregular marriage, and so bowed and left them. The joyous pair were not disconsolate. It was midnight; but they were resolved to be made honest man and wife before they slept, and forthwith they tripped off to Mayfair. Having summoned Keith from his bed, or his punch, the three worthy people entered the chapel. The parson did not care about the unlicensed condition in which the eager lovers presented themselves; but he could not marry them, he said, without a ring. Ultimately he tore one from his own bed-curtains, with which nymph and swain were duly bound as hard and fast as Keith could bind them.

Keith contented himself, in 1754, when deprived of

his supposed right to contract marriages, with d—ning the bishops, and threatening to underbury them. Meanwhile, the Fleet and Mayfair parsons suppressed, and the recalcitrant marrying clergy, like Grierson and Wilkinson, transported, there were still people who could feel compassion for young ladies who, as Lydia Languish did, thought marriage a dull thing unless they were first run away with! For runaway couples a sailing packet was put on at Southampton, in 1760. In this they could be wafted to Guernsey, and there be secretly married, in spite of the law of England! But this method was costly, uncertain, and Love was liable to be detained by wind and tide. Surer means were required to evade pursuers, and then appeared the Scottish blacksmith at Gretna Green, and the Scottish innkeeper at Springfield. A man named Paisley, a tobacconist, is said to have been actually the first who celebrated these clandestine marriages over the Border. He stuck to his work the longest, for he did not die (and then in harness) till 1814, when he had reached a very advanced age. An Act of Parliament has since destroyed the vocation of the Border “priests of Hymen.”

Before and after clandestine marriages were celebrated in England, marital arrangements of a singular character were entered into in Scotland. The most curious of these, perhaps, was one known by the name of “handfisting.” This prevailed at Langholme, in Dumfries-shire. Couples married themselves for a

year by the simple process of shaking hands ; and in this way are said to have been married for a season James, Earl of Murray, and Isabel, daughter of the Laird of Innes !

I will close this subject of Irregular Marriages with the record of one (in 1754) that was both regular and irregular. John Philips, the poet, had a brother named Robert. At the age of a month or two over eighty (when he was residing in Herefordshire), he married Miss Anne Bowdler, a lady who was a year or so under eighty. The public announcement of this marriage stated that it took place "after a courtship of sixty years. The marriage had been postponed in courtesy to some relations who disapproved the match."

How influential and obstinately long-lived must that kinsfolk have been, out of "courtesy" to whom a pair of young lovers, barely out of their teens, "postponed" their marriage for threescore years ! A terrible story of domestic persecution may be connected with this incident. They who would smile at two octogenarians marrying over the grave and not over the cradle of their hopes, may suppress their scorn. There is a sad and solemn dignity in this incident ; but it has its cheerful side in the testimony it affords, that, despite the burthen of years, the heart never grows old, and that in its honest sympathies and affections it may be as sensitive, as faithful, and as true at fourscore as at twenty.

I have heard that clandestine marriages were once as commonly celebrated in and about the Peak, Derbyshire, as in the Fleet or Mayfair. The only place, now, where Free Marriage is an institution is where Free Love is a recognised fact. In the United States a couple may be married in any church or in no church, at any hour they please, in a house or under the heavens, with or without banns or licence, and equally with or without registration. Those marriages, like Scottish marriages, by mere acknowledgment before witnesses, are binding; but there are other unions there, not unlike the old Scottish "handfastings," where wives for the hour and husbands for the season keep house together, as long as caprice holds them, at "Berlin Heights" and "Modern Times."\*

The old discouragement of marriage in priests' households led to a tenderness of concern with regard to concubinage, though very strait-laced persons used to maintain that a dozen mistresses abroad were better, less scandalous, than one at home. Certainly, the old sentiment had not died out in York during the last century. When Dr. Jacques Sterne, the Precentor of the Cathedral, had marked the absence from the choir, thrice in one week, of the Rev. Mr. Warneford, sub-chanter of the Cathedral, he hailed him, on his next appearance, with a rough demand to account for his neglect. The jolly vicar answered, "Mr. Precentor,

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\* "Spiritual Wives," by W. Hepworth Dixon.

I have been to Acomb, where my wife is very ill; my own wife, Mr. Precentor!"—and Mr. Davies, who records the incident in his memoir on the York Press, adds that "they who were acquainted with the domestic habits of the Precentor, well understood the point of the retort." It was the same Warneford who began the marrying of an old couple with, "I am the Resurrection and the Life!" "Oh, sir!" cried the bridegroom, "we have come to be married!" "Umph!" growled the vicar, "much fitter to be buried!"

Throughout this chapter we have often been in equivocal company. We may perhaps sweeten our soiled imaginations by taking a turn again, for longer or shorter time, in front of the pulpits.



## LONG AND SHORT SERMONS.

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THOSE persons who are more ready to be convinced by short sermons than by long discourses, may take as much comfort as warning from the case of Eutychus. The poor lad fell asleep and, therewith, out of the window of the third story, at Troas, weary with Paul's sermon, which had begun in the day and had not ended at midnight. Through Paul's instrumentality no harm came to the sleeper. The latter was not censured by the Apostle for yielding to slumber; therefore there is no offence in giving way to sleep when preachers are too "lengthy." But Paul, after restoring Eutychus, went back and "talked" till daybreak; therefore a religious messenger may continue to proclaim his message as long as a listener remains to heed him. Still in this historical fact there is comfort for the somnolent.

Later saints were as forgiving on this point as the Apostle. St. Patrick on one occasion delivered a sermon to a devout Irish congregation which lasted four days and four nights! Among his hearers was that mother of religious activity and thorough woman

of business, St. Bridget. "Among his hearers?" Yes; but only as Eutychus was among those of Paul. Before the sun had gone down once on the preacher, Bridget, worn out by her virtuous activity, was fast asleep, and a compassionate miracle kept her so till the sermon came to its conclusion. When the devout maid awoke, she looked up at Patrick and blushed. The Scoto-Irish apostle looked down on Bridget and smiled. She excused herself by a hint that she had yielded only to supernatural influences, for she had had an allegorical dream which was as good as a sermon, and which she described at a length almost equal to that of the discourse under which she had succumbed. Whether St. Patrick compared her dream with his oration, or her freshness with the prostration of his congregation, I do not know, but he confessed that the sleeper had known a greater enjoyment than the listeners.

It may be noticed as a singularity, that the man who conceived, or rather who believed in what was of far higher conception, a dispensation of boundless mercy, namely Origen, was the inventor of long sermons. He was, however, the first who explained Scripture in his discourses, and his power in this respect may have compensated for the labour of listening. Many of Origen's successors have been prosy without being explanatory, and thus a benefit has been converted into an affliction and a calamity.

One of the closest followers of Origen in preaching

discourses, that would last "from Dan to Beersheba," vexed the ears of some of our remote ancestors. This preacher of the very longest sermons was Abbot Eustace of Haye, in Normandy, who, in 1201, came over to this country with a lengthening object in view—that of increasing the duration of the Sabbath, by making it extend from three o'clock on Saturday afternoon to sunrise on Monday morning. His authority for proposing an unwelcome change to those who were wont to be merry on the Sunday eve, was an alleged epistle from the hand of Christ, which had been found on the altar of St. Simon at Golgotha. But the people would not be convinced, although Eustace preached for three hours at one time, and used to support his assertions by maintaining that as a Wakefield miller was grinding corn after three o'clock on Saturday he got only a rush of blood instead of flour, while his more orthodox mill-wheel stood immovable.

The next preacher of long sermons was a pleasanter man than the Norman abbot. The *Gradus ad Cantabrigiam* thus speaks of him—"John Alcock, by divine grace Bishop of Ely, on the first Sunday in 1483 preached a good and pleasant sermon in the church of St. Mary, Cambridge. He began at one o'clock in the afternoon and ended at half-past three." Two hours and a half may be considered as a "long spell," for men's minds were then agitated by the accession of Richard III., and no man knew what

would result therefrom. Alcock was not Bishop of Ely at the time above named. He was diocesan of Worcester, and had formerly held the see of Rochester, and the Mastership of the Rolls. He was as lucky a lawyer as he had been a prelate, for he was almost the only person who had served Richard Plantagenet that Henry Tudor would also receive into his service. By the latter king, Alcock was appointed chancellor and nominated to the rich see of Ely; but Henry did not relish his long discourses, and the preaching bishop soon disappeared from Court; yet not to live idly or uselessly, for he was an active and benevolent prelate, and his hearers overlooked the length of his sermons on the ground of their being "good and pleasant."

If history and tradition may be credited, the Scottish prelates and priests before the Reformation either preached very brief sermons, or never preached at all. When Cardinal Beaton urged Archbishop Gavin Dunbar, of Glasgow, to take the pulpit from the great Reformer, Wishart, at Ayr, he was obeyed, but to little purpose, for while Wishart held a multitude enthralled at the Market Cross, Dunbar's discourse in the pulpit was to this effect—"They say we should preiche! Quhy not? Better lait thryve nor nevir thryve! Haud us still for your bishope, and we will provyde better the next time." Learned and agreeable as Dunbar was, he had not the power of delivering a discourse either *ex tempore*, or by rote, or from

notes, and in no other way could it be delivered at that time. It was the same with the less dignified clergy. The "Satire of the Three Estates" has a fling at a priest who uses coarse language, and boasts that if he cannot preach he is a capital hand at ball playing!

Modern congregations are apt to think that "twenty minutes" comprise the limit within which a sensible preacher should necessarily confine himself. This was not the opinion of the old time. When Latimer was about to preach for the first time before Henry VIII., Cranmer, who had a good deal to say on the subject, wrote to "Master Hugh," among other things, as follows: "I would ye should so study to comprehend your matters that, in any condition, ye stand no longer in the pulpit than an hour or an hour and a half, at the most, for by long expense of time, the king and the queen shall, peradventure, wax so weary at the beginning, that they shall have small delight to continue throughout with you to the end."

A lively opening is here enjoined as a stimulant to keep attention awake to the end. Our old kings did not dislike long discourses, and James I. as little loved short sermons as Henry VII., or some of our Norman kings. In a short sermon which Bishop Williams preached before James, the prelate introduced a word which soon belonged to slang; namely, *quædams*, to designate what is now called the *Anonyma* sisterhood. The sermon is described by Hacket as

being "very smart against the simpleness of vain attire wherein wanton '*Quædams*' of those days came to that excess that they delighted altogether in the garb and habit and rioterly fashions of men." James was so delighted with a sermon which was at once short and had a fling at women, that he ordered it to be printed.

The hour-glasses in pulpits were turned more than once, with facetious allusions to having "another glass" by the preachers who laid on and spared not. Some were more ready at lengthy extemporatory discourses than at brief extemporatory prayer. This was the case with Archbishop Parker, who once preached a long sermon under great difficulties. He was a rare and fearless speaker to the "people." Thorough gentleman, he knew how to treat, lead, and subdue a mob. In Kit's Norfolk rebellion, Parker preached to the rebels, from a stage beneath their own oak; and he preached at full length against them and their rebellion. Some of the hotter spirits got beneath the stage, and, through the interstices of the planks, pricked his feet with their pikes, and kept the preacher in continual movement to avoid them. But he did not cease holding forth against them, nor did he lose patience nor dignity. His wild congregation finished by listening to Parker with respect, and they dismissed him without injury or insult. The incident is creditable to both parties, and to the times. In these days, such a preacher, at a Dublin meeting, would be bludgeoned into a mummy by the coal-porters.

Donne, when he preached the sermon at the opening of Lincoln's-inn Chapel, in 1623, recognised the customary law of length for a sermon. He had just got beyond the limit, when he paused. " 'Tis time to end," he said. " St. Basil himself, as acceptable as he was to his auditory, in his second sermon on the 14th Psalm, takes knowledge that he had preached an hour : and therefore broke off. I see it is a compass that all ages have thought sufficient." And then the good doctor wound up with a " finally" of a quarter of an hour's duration.

One of the heaviest and longest sermonizers of the seventeenth century was the fattest and jolliest of men, namely, Dr. Manton, who was chaplain to the Protectorate. He prayed for Richard as well as for Oliver, and then was regularly ordained by the Bishop of Galloway, as soon as Charles II. came to the throne. Usher said of him, not that he was a luminous but a voluminous preacher. Bolingbroke, when a lad, learned to yawn by trying to listen to him, and was driven towards high-churchism merely to escape his sermons in the pulpit or in print. " My next letter," wrote Bolingbroke to Swift, " shall be as long as one of Dr. Manton's discourses."

Tillotson, who was very happy in "conceived prayer," as it was called in his time, never wanting the proper phrase when it was most required, failed altogether as an extemporary preacher, even in a short sermon. On the first and only occasion of his attempt and non-success,

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he chose for his text : " We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." He began the sermon with hesitation ; found himself guilty of iteration, blushed at the confusion into which the discourse had fallen, then became himself the more confounded, and, at the close of a painful ten minutes, descended from the pulpit, in a state of the utmost depression.

A similar unpleasant result attended the solitary attempt of M. de Beaumanoir de Lavardie, Bishop of Mans, to preach a brief discourse without book, in 1649. He had managed to give expression to a few words, when he suddenly stopped short, and after a moment or two of silent hesitation, the bishop withdrew from the pulpit. A short time afterwards, the prelate had his portrait painted, and exhibited. It was inspected among others, by the witty Madame de Sablé. " Good heavens !" cried that lively lady, " how very like ! He looks exactly as if he were trying to preach !"


In the seventeenth century it was one of the objects of George Fox to stop preaching altogether. He could not away with sermons either long or short. The effect of his attempt to suppress preaching is amusingly shown by himself in his diary : " One evening," he says, " I passed to Cambridge ; and when I came into the town, the scholars, hearing of me, were up and were exceeding rude. I kept on my horse's back and rid through them in the Lord's



power; but they unhorsed Amos Stoddard before he could get to the inn. When we were in the inn, they were so rude there in the courts, and in the streets, that the miners, the colliers, and carters could never be ruder. The people of the house asked us what we would have for supper, as is the usual way of innkeepers. 'Supper!' said I: "were it not that the Lord's power is over them, these rude scholars look as if they would pluck us in pieces, and make supper of us.' They knew I was so against their trade, the trade of preaching, which they were there as apprentices to learn, that they raged as bad as ever did Diana's craftsmen against Paul."

Burnet did not share George Fox's dislike to sermons generally, but he not unreasonably thought that they should have a limit. He speaks of having heard six sermons preached on a fast-day in Scotland, one immediately after the other. "I was not a little weary," he says, "of so tedious a service." He does not say how long the half-dozen lasted; but if they were delivered by as many preachers the service could not have been so tedious as that noticed by Strype, when he alludes to a Puritan preacher who so abused the advantage he enjoyed over a congregation at his mercy, as to preach a sermon which lasted from nine o'clock till one!

Whitfield's first sermon, the only one he possessed wherewith to begin his ministry, was not only preached before it was delivered by himself, at St. Mary-le-



Crypt, Gloucester, but out of that long discourse a country clergyman made two short ones. Whitfield had sent the sermon for his clerical friend to read, and to learn therefrom that the writer had perhaps mistaken his vocation. The clergyman, however, cut the discourse in two, preached one half in the morning, the other in the evening, and then sent it back, with a guinea for the use of it! This was the sermon which, when preached at full length, drove fifteen of the congregation mad; at least such complaint was made of it to the bishop (Martin Benson, 1734-52): "I hope," said the good prelate, "the madness be not forgotten before next Sunday."

Scotland has perhaps altogether furnished the longest-winded preachers; and among this class may be included that ultra-Calvinistic minister, Oliphant, whose name has been preserved by Burns as one who often made common-sense yell again. Just a century ago Mr. Oliphant was a divinity student, and his labours in the Church did not cease till 1818. He was a stern man, with abundance of wit, one or two applications of which I will cite. They will probably remind my readers of other pulpit extravagances, where the preacher seems to have worn the cap and bells. Mr. Oliphant had an impatient congregation at Kilmarnock, some of whom used to slip away before he had got through half his sermon. To this congregation, whom he used respectively to address under the division of saints and sinners, in his closing words of

improvement, he once said—"I am told that all the sinners in this congregation leave before the conclusion of the discourse. I will therefore, on this account, invert my usual practice, and make my observations to sinners first—well knowing that *the saints* will sit out the service." Of course all desired to be reckoned among the godly, and there was a full attendance to the end.

The above reminds me of a more violent cure for those impatient of long services adopted by Dr. Davis, Dean of Cork, who in 1689 was holding the office of lecturer at Great Yarmouth. Morning service in his church was over by half an hour after noon; but nevertheless the congregation found it too long, and grumbled violently. As they would not listen to reason, the dean took his own method with them; and on one Sunday, just as the dean's colleague had concluded the morning sermon, Dr. Davies rose at the reading-desk and commenced the afternoon service. The grinning congregation who found themselves subjected to this discipline would have been a study for a Hogarth.

To return, however, to Oliphant, whose bold wit in the pulpit was not unlike the licence of the jester, conveying undeniable truths under cover of quaintness. He once commented on the offer of Satan to give "all these things" to Christ, by exclaiming, "Him gi'e Christ a' these things! Foul thief! he hadna' the breadth o' his hand to gi'e!" And again, after quot-

ing Peter's boast to Christ, "Lo, we have left all and followed thee;" he added, "A puir all, Peter, to mak' a boast o'!—a bit coble and a wheen auld nets." Referring to the swine into which the devils had been driven running down a precipice into the sea, and being choked, he is reported to have ended a long exposition by saying, "And had it been but His holy will that the devils had been choked too!"

Men like Oliphant have not been uncommon in France, making their long sermons short and their heavy ones light by their humour. Of this quality was Father Brydaine, who lived in the first half of the last century. He was one of those preachers who are not content to achieve great success by natural appliances, but who must be theatrical, pantomimic, farcical, and exaggerated. On one occasion his servant dragged him into church by a rope round his neck, as an illustration of human reluctance to fulfil duty. At another, when preaching a long sermon on the judgment day, he suddenly disappeared, but he might be heard bellowing at the bottom of his pulpit in the character of a lost sinner, tossed on the flames of a fire which burned for ever, but never consumed. And yet Brydaine had happy impulses. He one day finished one of his brief but telling sermons to a street congregation, on the shortness of life, by saying, "I will now take you all home!" and he led his hearers straight away to a churchyard, where he bade them "farewell" at their own doors.

In the present century, an English preacher of as short discourses as Brydaine's was not half so amusing. Canning rather unpleasantly impressed upon this individual, Dr. Legge, Bishop of Oxford (1815-27), that brevity in preaching was not inconsistent with a sort of prolixity. "How did you like my sermon?" said Legge. "I thought it rather—short," was the reply of Canning. "I am aware it was short," rejoined the prelate, "but I was afraid of being tedious." Canning, according to the well-known story, is said to have remarked, "You *were* tedious!"

An anecdote attributes to Lord Normanby (but I think the incident is older) as witty a rebuke to a preacher as that of Canning's. "There were some things in your sermon to-day," said Lord Normanby, when Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, to one of his chaplains, "which I never heard before." The flattered clergyman replied, "that he thought the subject of his discourse hardly admitted of novelty of treatment, and he would be happy to know what had struck his lordship as new." "Sir," said Lord Normanby, "during your sermon I heard the clock strike twice."

This double testimony of Paul and Patrick against over-long sermons is highly satisfactory, but it does not end here. It is cumulative, and the last contribution to it comes from no less a source than the primate of the Church of England. At a recent Royal Academy dinner, the archbishop made reference in a speech delivered by him, in answer to the usual toast

in honour of the guests, to Mr. Millais' picture, "My Second Sermon." As Dr. Longley spoke briefly, spiritedly, and to the point, I cannot do better than quote his own very pleasant and very significant words :—

"On the present occasion," he said, "I have learnt a very wholesome lesson, which may be usefully studied, not by myself alone, but by those of my right rev. brethren also that surround me. I see a little lady there (pointing to Mr. Millais' picture of a child asleep in church, entitled 'My Second Sermon') who, though all unconscious whom she has been addressing, and of the homily she has been reading to us during the last three hours, has in truth, by the eloquence of her silent slumber,—(cheers and laughter)—given us a grave warning of the evil of lengthy sermons and drowsy discourses. Sorry indeed should I be to disturb that sweet and peaceful slumber, but I beg that when she does awake she may be informed who they are who have pointed the moral of her story—(cheers)—have drawn the true inference from the change that has passed over her since she heard her first sermon, and have resolved to profit by the lecture she has thus delivered to them. (Loud cheers.)"

Those "loud cheers" were, in truth, the hearty "amens" of people long accustomed to suffer under the painful infliction to which the archbishop alluded.

Kotzebue became inspired by a hatred for church and church service, in consequence of being compelled

when at school at Weimar, not only to attend, in common with his fellows, twice every Sunday at long services, but to write out a *précis* of each weary sermon afterwards. The commandment to do no manner of work on the Sabbath was broken weekly, and the hearts of those poor schoolboys were never lifted up to God by the breath of flowers, inspiration of pure air, song of birds, incense of grass crushed out by the feet that gambolled over it; for those lads there was no admission to the Cathedral of Immensities: the very door of it which leads to the Supreme throne was shut in their face. Kotzebue would have hated something more than vapid sermons and Weimar Sundays, but for a discovery he made of a hymn-book, with which was bound up a history of the "Siege of Jerusalem," and this he contrived to read Sunday after Sunday, till he had nearly got it by heart, and yet never wearied of it. Of the vapid sermons he could always make such dreamy abstracts as to pass muster as genuine from their very distracted unintelligibility.

In Sunday discipline the world is getting more enlightened and humane towards children than it used to be. The Sunday is not everywhere for the young a severe fast, instead of a joyous festival to be kept with a gay decorum. Perhaps one of the first men who commenced a salutary reform in this matter in favour of the young was the elder of the two Marquises of Bath, who died in 1837. He once told me that

during the first years of his children's attendance at divine service at Longleat, they always withdrew from the family pew into the adjacent gardens as soon as the prayers were concluded. They were mercifully spared the sermon.

I remember "long, long ago," in the North of England, accompanying a little grandson of the marquis on his first presence at a church service, including the sermon, and the morning *was* a weary one to the youthful Christian. As we came out and stepped into his father's park, I asked him what he thought of the new circumstance of that morning, and how he felt about it. "Well," he said, with a humorous expression of face which accented all that George L—— uttered, "I think it was so long before the end came, that I feel I can't remember when the beginning was." For that illustration his father gave him, with his brothers and sisters, a rare afternoon in the neighbouring wood, and over the meadows by the Wharf side. If to enjoy be to obey, their obedience was yielded to the utmost. In memory, I can still see that brilliant and joyous group: the father as brilliant, joyous, and *as young* as any of his children; and the echoes of their heart-laughter still come across me now and then as echoes of the cheerful songs of the "long, long ago."

It is said that the charity sermons which produce the most for the benefit of those for whom they are preached are the shortest. Connected with this subject



there is a story of Swift, which is in the dean's manner, but which was probably beyond even his audacity. He is said, after reading his text for a charity sermon, "He who giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord," to have confined his sermon to the one phrase, "There, my brethren, if you are satisfied with the security, down with your dust." Something not very unlike this, however, actually occurred four years ago in the cathedral at Orleans. The bishop (Dupanloup) was about to preach for the distressed workmen of Rouen. His sermon was very much to the point, and here is the whole of it: "This is no time for long sermons, but for good works. You are all acquainted with the calamities of those whose cause I have come here this day to plead before you. Once upon a time, a king, whose name is still cherished by us, said to his companions in arms, on whom he thought with reason he could rely, 'My good friends, I am your king: you are Frenchmen. Yonder is the enemy; let us march.' I will not address you," added the prelate, "in any other words this day than those. I am your bishop: you are Christians. Yonder are not our enemies, but our brothers who suffer. Let us fly to their succour." The bishop then descended from the pulpit, made the collection himself, and carried with him to the altar a sum equivalent to 612*l.* sterling. The result would perhaps have been less had the sermon been longer, or the collection made by deputies.

Churchill, who resigned the curacy of St. John's,

Westminster, to save himself from being turned out, says of his prosaic powers: "Sleep at my bidding crept from pew to pew." But those who cannot sleep at a sermon for the being bidden may be all the more irritable at being kept awake. How persons thus situated, to whom long sermons were intolerable, once contrived to induce the preacher to deliver short discourses, is perhaps worth the telling, though it will not be in the power of everyone to redress a similar grievance as promptly. I will not say how long ago this circumstance occurred, nor name the locality of the persons concerned; but here are the facts: One of the clerical masters of a celebrated public school was, during a certain season, the preacher in the neighbouring abbey. The pupils at the school, of whom the preacher's son was one, formed part of the congregation. To his audience the minister delivered discourses which, however attractive to the older listeners, wearied the vexed ears of the scholars. At first they attended with their usual decorous bearing; then they grew restless; on another Sunday some fell asleep, for which they had to undergo rebuke; and finally, Sabbath after Sabbath, as the hour was passed over and the limits of attention as well as time were ruthlessly transgressed, the lads grew exasperated. With exasperation came resolve to assert their rights and make them triumph. Whereupon they arrested the preacher's son in the cloisters, and said to him, with a frank earnestness which he could not mistake:

“Look here, you sir! Every time after this, that your father’s sermons are more than twenty minutes long, we will give you a devil of a hiding on the Monday morning!” The son, perhaps, was not unwilling to present the spirit of this Grand Remonstrance to his sire. The father was certainly a considerate parent and a remarkably sensible man, for he never after exceeded the twenty minutes, nor took any complaining notice to the authorities of the sharp alternative to which he and his son had been subjected. As for the scholars, they listened to his briefer sermons with an affected intensity of attention which was warrant for their gratitude.

All the stories of sleeping congregations being aroused by some eccentricity of speech on the part of the preacher are derived from the East. Perhaps the earliest of these stories is in the Talmud, as quoted by Mr. Deitsch in his famous article in a recent number of the *Quarterly*. It is to this effect: “It was a hot Eastern afternoon, and while he (an old master) was expounding some intricate subtlety of the law, his hearers quietly fell away in drowsy slumbers. All of a sudden he burst out—‘There was once a woman in Egypt who brought forth at one birth six hundred thousand men!’ And my readers may fancy how his audience started up at this remarkable tale of the prolific Egyptian woman. ‘Her name,’ the master calmly proceeded, ‘was Jochabed, and she was the mother of Moses, who was worth as much as all

those six hundred thousand armed men put together who went up from Egypt.' The professor then, after a brief legendary digression, proceeded with his legal intricacies, and his hearers slept no more that afternoon."

The latest instance of unlimited sleeping in church-time reaches us from a country which assumes to be much more righteous than its neighbours, and which boasts of having greater appetite for sermons than any of its contemporaries. Nevertheless, the Rev. Dr. Guthrie stated last year that he had been present in a church in Thurso, the Scottish town the furthest off from London and her wicked ways. The congregation consisted of twelve hundred persons, and Dr. Guthrie says that he saw six hundred of them asleep! Whether he was better occupied in counting them than the sleepers were in their somnolency may be doubted. He thought the slumberers mere sons of Belial; but Sir George Sinclair astounded him by the assurance that in that large congregation at Thurso he had seen nearly every individual, whole pews full, fast asleep! "It must be the bad ventilation," quoth Dr. Guthrie. Sir George perhaps thought the length of the sermon might have something to do with it; but that was not an observation to be made to a popular minister!

This subject has, perhaps, been like some of the sermons, long. Texts will naturally be briefer.

## TEXTS AND CHURCH STORIES.

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WHEN Adhelm preached, piped, or sang discourses to the Anglo-Saxon peasants whom he collected on the highways as they were running away from church, his texts were probably as amusing as his comments; but they have not come down to us. We know more surely that preachers in remote periods bent their texts so as to connect them with coming events, just as Father Hyacinthe, at Notre Dame, does with text or sermon when the Government requires political aid from the pulpit.

One of the earliest examples of specially-chosen texts comes to us from St. Albans. A certain monk, Richard de Wallingford, a smith's son—a good mathematician but a poor theologian—had foretold at Oxford the death of Abbot Hugh of St. Albans. Subsequently, hearing that Hugh was ill, Richard hurried to the monastery to further his own election. He was allowed to preach before the chapter, and he chose for his text (the 1st Samuel xvii. 8), "Choose you a man;" but he seems to have added a significant word to the original, which does not say much for the Bible

knowledge of his hearers, and he boldly gave out the words, "*Eligite vobis virum meliorem*" (*Choose ye a better man !*). Soon after, Brother Richard of Trengere preached, and perhaps knowing how things were likely to go, he took his text from John xv. 16–19 : "I have chosen you." How far he of Wallingford understood this is not ascertained ; but on the day of election he stated that at the celebration of mass he had received a sort of divine assurance that the man whom the chapter might elect would act in every way for the glory of God and the good of the Church. The chapter thought they could not do better than elect the man who had preached from so fitting a text, and who had been the recipient of a divine manifestation. Accordingly, Richard was unanimously elected abbot ; and when he was informed of the new dignity laid upon him, he swore it was more than he could bear or his merits would warrant. But cunning fellows there who studied him sharply from beneath their cowls, and remembered his text, his prophecy, and his boasted connexion with Heaven, said that Richard's excuses were all shams ; and they smiled at his assertion that he only accepted the office of abbot out of his fear to resist what seemed to be the dictates of the Holy Ghost !

However this may be, Abbot Richard did not lose his sense of humour. On his return from visiting the pope at Avignon, by whom his election was confirmed, he at once proceeded to the pulpit and delivered a

sermon to his monks, the very text of which must have moved the muscles that permit a smile. "Exodus xvi. 29th verse," said the new abbot. "Every man in his place!" and Richard was in *his*.

In early times, the Bible was not the only repertory from which a preacher took his text. Political preachers, at least, went to other sources. John Ball, the famous demagogue-priest of the fourteenth century, once gathered a congregation around him on Blackheath numbering two hundred thousand men. If they expected to hear a seditious speech rather than a sermon they were not disappointed. Ball chose for his text the then popular proverb :—

"When Adam dalf and Eve span,  
Who was thanne a gentilman?"

Applying this text to Scripture, Ball informed his delighted auditors that God had made all men equal; that if He had intended one to be servant or slave to another, God would have so created them at the beginning; and that since men had subdued weaker men to their service, it was the duty of the latter to become strong and slay their oppressors, to whatever rank or station the latter might belong. To be masters and not to serve was the privilege of the people! Such was the precious conclusion which Ball drew from a text which showed that man was born to service, and that society existed by due division of labour among the strong and the weak. Ball was the father of those modern demagogues who, while they affect

moderation, suggest violence and hint murder by deploring its possibility. He was a "philosopher" too, a lover of wisdom, one of those who do not understand the fair mistress they love, and who make all thieftum ecstatic by recommending a system leading to universal plunder. But Ball himself would disown the advanced demagogues of these later days, particularly such "preachers of the Gospel" in Ireland as teach children to become assassins by first instructing them to render honour to murderers.

I have alluded to Scripture passages having been selected by preachers in furtherance of political purposes. When Orleton, Bishop of Hereford (1317-27)\* preached at Oxford before young Prince Edward and Queen Isabella, he took for his text (according to Lingard) the words from Genesis: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." This was remembered, as well as dark passages in the sermon itself, when the subsequent events of that and the succeeding reign developed themselves. Of these intentional texts many samples might be given. Some that were unintentional are more striking.

An unlucky text is numbered among the many omens which are said to have foreshadowed, or to have coincided with, the doom which fell on Charles I. The preacher at that king's coronation was Senhouse,

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\* *Ob.* Bishop of Winchester, 1345.



Bishop of Carlisle (1624–26), and his text was—"I will give thee a crown of life." "This," says Echard, "was rather thought to put the new king in mind of his death than his duty in government, and to have been his funeral sermon when he was alive, as if he was to have none when he was buried." The above text was, of course, an accident. Not so the one applied by a layman, still more aptly, after Charles had been sold by the Scots. The French ambassador, finding himself constrained to give a largesse to some Scots cavalry who had performed the office of escort, with which he could have dispensed, showed them a half-crown, and asked how many pence were therein. When one of the men had answered "thirty," the ambassador exclaimed—"For so many pieces of silver did Judas betray his master!" and he hurled the half-crown at them, not in graciousness, but contempt.

The French pulpit of the seventeenth century affords some strange examples of selections of texts. Boullanger, who is better known as "*le Petit Père André*," and who was one of the coarsest and most comic of the French pulpit buffoons of the first half of the seventeenth century, had once to preach an eulogium of St. Ignatius Loyola in presence of a large body of Jesuits. He took for his text the words—*Vos estis fines terræ*, and translated it for them—"Vous êtes les fins (cunning fellows) de la terre!"

This false translating of texts was, however, of older


date and of more serious application than this in the French pulpit. Towards the end of the sixteenth century the Leaguer-divine, Boucher, preached at Notre Dame from Psalm lxi. 15—" *Eripe me Domine de luto, et non infigar!*" (Take me out of the mire that I sink not!) and translating the word for *mire* by the French word *bourbe*, he gravely proclaimed the passage to be a positive and prophetic command to the French to "*de se de-Bourbonner*"—to reject a king of the Bourbon family, however "*Catholique, Apostlique, et Romaine*" it might appear to be!

With French divines texts were often selected so as to adapt themselves to the three divisions into which early sermons were divided. It is told of a French preacher that he selected Jeremiah i. 6—"Ah! ah! ah!" (as the word is repeated in the Latin Vulgate) to illustrate the festival of the Assumption. His auditory were told that such were the words heard by the Virgin as the angels bore her into heaven—"Ah, my daughter!" "Ah, my mother!" "Ah, my spouse!" from the three persons of the Trinity. He spoke of the joy caused by this salutation; and he added—"I shall now make you share in this joy, my brethren, by selecting this *ah! ah! ah!* for the object and division of my sermon!"

We hear of another preaching on the festival of the patron saint of his church, and taking for his text the single word *Hoc*. "For," said he, "in this trinity of letters are the initialed virtues of our saint—

H is his humility, O his obedience, C his chastity; and these are the three subjects on which my panegyric shall be founded. *Ave Maria!*"

There is an instance told by French writers showing how a commonplace text may happen to obtain an unintentioned applicability. A Capuchin preacher had reached the top step of the flight leading to his pulpit, when he tripped and accidentally fell head foremost down the stairs. The simplicity of the Capuchin costume allowed more of the friar's legs to be visible than he had ever intended to exhibit; but he recovered himself without fuss, ascended to the pulpit, and gave out his text (Matthew xvii. 9), but a smile passed over the faces of the congregation as he uttered the words—" *Nemini dixeritis visionem!*" (Tell the vision to no man!) The Capuchins were often pulpit buffoons, like Schiller's preaching friar in "Wallenstein's Camp," and the above story is not so improbable as it may appear. On the other hand camps have furnished heroes who have afforded admirable opportunity for applicable texts. Chief among these is the heroic Polish king, John Sobieski, who compelled the 200,000 men under Kara Mustapha to raise the siege of Vienna in 1683. The Polish hero thus performed a service which was of the utmost importance to Christendom, but for which he got but sorry thanks from Austria. The Church, however, was not ungrateful; and one clergyman, preaching on the subject of the great deliverance by the hero of



the day, took for his text one of the happiest passages that could be found in Scripture, namely—"There was a man sent from God whose name was John."

This could not sound profane, for it was applied to a man who really seemed a mailed messenger from heaven to rescue Europe from becoming Mahometan ! Other texts, equally applicable to their respective purposes, have been selected with less seriousness. Some have been chosen for the sake of a startling first phrase to open the sermon with, as in the famous text and sermon, by Sterne. The former was—"It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting," a text which he seems to have chosen merely that he might follow it up with the first words in his sermon—" *That* I deny !"

Sterne's style was that of the old, quaint preaching friars, who seemed laughing in their sleeves at what fell from their lips. But men more serious and earnest than Sterne have not been above joking in the matter at least of text-choosing. The grave South could stoop to pick up a text which was likely to take all the gravity out of such of his audience as were not offended by it. I refer to the time when he was preaching before the worshipful Company of Merchant Tailors ; and certainly he must have moved his hearers in various ways when he solemnly enunciated the words, "Not a remnant shall be saved." This is a far better attested story than the one which gives us the text of a funeral sermon on a penurious but wealthy

man, "So the *beggar* died;" or the one ascribed to a dozen personages, and which says that a minister whose wife had that morning become the mother of twins gave out for the hymn, "Not more than others I desire, but God hath given me more."

If we look for much humour in this matter from Irish divines we shall be disappointed. There is more simplicity to be found than humour. The Irish Church has *one* pleasant story of a text that was successfully applied to useful purpose. A poor clergyman, named Joseph, had rendered some valuable service to the head of the house of Butler, who promised, in return, to further the preferment of the preacher. Time passed, and performance did not follow upon promise. Weary of waiting, the country curate found his way to Dublin, and contrived to obtain access to the pulpit of the church where the great lord attended divine service. He choose for his text, "Yet did not the chief Butler remember Joseph, but forgot him." According to the story, which it is to be hoped is strictly true, the memory of the ungrateful lord returned, and the chief Butler forgot Joseph no more, but procured him lucrative preferment in the Church.

Turning again to England in the last century, it will be found that the Hanoverian pulpits, if I may so call them, showed some unseemly ecstasy at the death of Queen Anne. Dr. Owen, of Warrington, preached on the queen's demise from 1 Kings xvi. 30, "And Ahab, the son of Omri, did evil in the sight of the

Lord above all that were before him." The Baptist minister Bradbury, whom the queen used to call "bold Bradbury," whom Bishop Burnet esteemed as a friend, and who among Dissenters had the chief hand in aiding to establish the House of Hanover, employed on a like occasion an even more rudely significant text; it is at least *said* to have been: "Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her; for she is a king's daughter." Some members of the Hanoverian family, however, had texts applied to them in their turn that were very significant. Frederick, Prince of Wales, at the very hottest of the fierce quarrel which he kept up with the king and queen, attended St. James's Church. Secker, the rector, preached one Sunday when this matter was a scandal to the nation; and he is *said* on this occasion to have looked steadily at the prince as he pronounced these words from the Decalogue as his text, "Honour thy father and thy mother." This, however, is apocryphal. The prince did not indeed fare better on another occasion at the hands of the curate, Mr. Bonny, who commenced the service by a very pointed delivery of the words, as he turned towards the prince, "I will arise and go to my father, and say unto him, Father I have sinned," &c. . . . "and am no more worthy to be called thy son."

Later in the last century men had to be careful how they used and applied texts. Charles Wesley had to appear before the Wakefield magistrates. He had prayed that the Lord would call home his banished

ones, and he was accordingly accused of praying for the return of the Pretender. He got off on showing that he alluded only to those who are spoken of in various texts of Scripture as exiles from the kingdom of Heaven. The Pretender, however, was clearly seen in Scripture by other preachers, one of whom took Jeremiah x. 22, "Behold, the noise of the bruit is come, and a great commotion from the North country," and saw therein the rebellion in Scotland under that *brute* the Pretender.

When Whitfield was preparing to return to Georgia (1739), he asked Wesley to take his place at Bristol. Wesley immediately "consulted the oracles of God," opening the Bible for texts, the sense of which should direct him, or foretell what the issue of his going might be. The first was disencouraging, and the next half-dozen (for Wesley had more than the ardour of a heathen in this heathenish proceeding) were even more so. The last was, "Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, even in Jerusalem." To ordinary minds this text would seem to have no applicability, but Charles Wesley founded on it his attempt to dissuade John from deserting. While John, seeing in it something his brother could not see, girded up his loins, and set forth ready to meet any consequences of his removal as foretold in the above and other texts. The Wesleys inherited this feeling about texts from their father. After the burning of his house at Epworth, he picked up a remnant of his polyglot

Bible. The only legible words were those of the text, "Go, sell all that thou hast, and take up thy cross and follow me"—words by which he was solemnly impressed as being specially addressed to him.

It would be difficult perhaps to see any connexion between texts and turnpike trusts, but they were brought together more than a century ago.

In 1752, when turnpike roads were established in place of the old waggon tracks, it was a difficult matter to get people to ride or drive on them, the toll-bar dues being the thing most objected to. Country clergymen might go free on those roads, to and from divine service, but the roads did not find favour with them; certainly not with that particular gentleman who preached against novelties, and supplied a condemnatory comment on the new turnpike roads with this text from Jeremiah (vi. 16),—"Thus saith the Lord: Stand ye in the ways; and see and ask for the old paths where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

A text may fall pleasantly or painfully on the ear, but it may be so fixed as to be for ever a pain to the eye and to the mind. A clergyman who died early in the last century, Mr. Ashbourne, the incumbent of Crowle, left a testimony against his people in two texts which, by his direction, were engraved on his tombstone. The first was from Acts vii. 54—"Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost. As your fathers did, so do



ye." The second (Isaiah xlix. 4), was more personal to himself—"I have laboured in vain. I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain. Yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God." When Wesley visited Crowle, a generation after Mr. Ashbourne's death, he expressed a belief that the entailed curse had been taken off, inasmuch as that "there is now a more lively work of God here than in any of the neighbouring places." The population of Wesley's day had not, however, thus improved everywhere. At the village of Wrangle, in Lincolnshire, Wesley was frequently the guest of Mr. Gilbert, a substantial farmer, who received the "Methodist" into his house, despite the hostility of the parish authorities. He even allowed Wesley to preach in his barn. "On occasion of one of these visits, Mr. Wesley and his host were dragged together through a pond!—the clergyman witnessing the sport from the church-steeple; and I have been informed that the operation then in fashion of *tarring and feathering* was afterwards performed. I am told also that for this outrage Mr. Gilbert, little litigious as he was, prosecuted the perpetrators; that for a similar onset about the same time in Yorkshire legal redress was resorted to; and that in both cases it was obtained, being the first verdicts at that time given against the clergy as the setters-on of the populace.\*

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\* "Memoir of the Rev. Joseph Gilbert," by his Widow.

The University pulpits do not afford many samples of *peculiar* texts. Cambridge yields one that was aptly chosen and applied, and Oxford may be illustrated by another that is not without real wit and sharp humour. A custom that was common in Latimer's days was, at a later period, confined to Cambridge university men who desired to express their disapproval of what a preacher was holding forth to them—namely, the noisy scraping of the feet. This might be done while every offender looked attentive, and escaped detection. Dr. James Scott, the "political parson" known as *Anti-Sejanus* and *Old Sly Boots*, under which pseudonyms he wrote and published, announced his intention of preaching against this practice of "foot-scraping," and the incensed University men went to hear him with the heaviest shoes they could put on. Scott took for his text—"Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools; for they consider not that they do evil." The text, which was most appropriate, excited confusion and uproar in the galleries; but Scott called the proctors to his support, and silence being obtained, he delivered a sermon which, by its eloquence and argument, moved the hearts of the hearers, and kept their feet from proceeding to give the "sacrifice of fools."

To Oxford is referred an often-told story concerning a happy text said to have been selected by Paley.

Pitt, soon after he was made Prime Minister, and when he was not above four-and-twenty years of age, went down to Oxford at a time when some Church preferment was at his disposal and the expectants "legion !" The preacher, who had, according to the story, to preach in young Pitt's presence, at once excited a variety of emotions by the audacity of his text, from St. John : "There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes, but what are they among so many ?" The story says that a portion of the loaves and fishes was conferred by Pitt on this pleasant and witty satirist. As far as Paley is concerned, the story is untrue. He only said that if he had been called upon to preach he would have taken that text.

One text thus brings fortune to a preacher, while another may be as the oracle of doom to him who gives it forth. Some time before Dr. Dodd committed the forgery which brought him to tribulation, anguish, and the gallows, he preached a sermon from a text which sounds like an oracular intimation of his own fate. The words were, "Thou shalt find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest ; but the Lord shall give thee a trembling heart and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind ; and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee ; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life." Very few oracles have spoken so explicitly as this ; and if Dodd had been consulting the Bible for a text which should shadow his destiny, he could hardly have come on

one which could have more positively indicated his ill-fortune and the ignominy of its consummation. Such consultations were not uncommon. Sortilege, casting of lots, by casually opening the Bible, and putting the finger on a text, was privately practised by both Wesley and Whitfield.

For the free-er construction of texts, a singular remedy was proposed in the last century by a Reverend William Cooke, a fellow of Eton, who, in a sermon, suggested that a fair edition of the original Scriptures should be published, "for the use of learned men in their closets, in which there should be no notice, either in the text or margin, of chapter, or verse, or paragraph, or any such arbitrary distinctions, and" (he adds) "I might go even so far as to say, any pointings or stops." Mr. Cooke thought that such an edition would leave the mind free from any influence of the eye! Walpole ridiculed the idea of making better sense of a book by reading it without the stops! and Selwyn proposed that the sermon should be sent to its author, with a request that he would be good enough to take out the stops, in order to help it to some sense. And then Walpole came in with his reference to the reading ability of clerical gentlemen. "Most of the parsons," he said, "that read the first and second lessons, practise Mr. Cooke's method of making them intelligible, for they seldom observe any stops!"

Among publishers of singular texts, Rowland Hill stands perhaps the most prominent. But Rowland

Hill was not the irreverent joker that some persons fancy he was in the pulpit ; and I believe there is no truth in the story that he rebuked Mrs. Hill's alleged outrageously fashionable head-dress, by choosing for his text, and looking at her pointedly as he delivered it: "Top (k)not come down!" There is no doubt of his power to have made an excellent sermon even on such a text. Able men have no difficulty. The late Rev. Lewis Way had something of Hill's humour in him. I once heard and saw him embarrass Sir Charles Stuart, our Ambassador in Paris, by a sermon, during which the Envoy looked almost as interested as when of a summer's evening he used to watch the audience as they left the little Théâtre des Variétés. It was one of the finest sermons ever preached in the old English Church in Paris, by the above-named celebrated extemporary preacher. The text was from Corinthians, and consisted of the simple word "Nothing." Sir Charles Stuart sat opposite the preacher, who seemed to *fling* the word at that free and easy representative of the King of England. The chief part of the discourse was employed in illustrating how all earthly things are Nothing ; but the preacher wound up with a smart philippic, in which he maintained that the ambassadors of earthly princes were to be included under that denominational word, and that the ordained envoys of the King of Heaven were alone *something* among the sons of men !


And this reference to the representatives of royalty

reminds me that, formerly, whenever a clergyman preached in presence of any member of the Royal Family, it was the *etiquette* for him to write out his text, which was placed in the royal pew, for the benefit of the august occupants, whose ears were supposed to be exempt from the tax of heeding the preacher, at the moment of delivering the extract, like those of commoner persons. A well-known story describes Dr. Delany as having been commanded to preach before George II. and his Court ; and this is what is said to have come of it. The doctor arrived late, and not knowing where to go, took up his position at the reading-desk, by the side of the reader. The latter looked upon this as an intrusion, the verger tried to pull the doctor out, and something like a struggle and a fight *is said* to have ensued. Subsequently, when the doctor was about to preach, the verger again obtruded himself, on the plea that the text had not been written out for the king, and the sermon could not be proceeded with till this was done. Ultimately, Mrs. Delany had to write it on the back of a letter. The text was then placed before the king and his queen, Caroline, and *then*, the doctor was permitted to begin.

This oft-repeated story, however, falls to pieces before Mrs. Delany's account of the incident. "Well," she writes to Mrs. Dewes, "the affair of preaching before his majesty is over, to the great ease of mine and D. D.'s mind. He was as anxious about it as if

he had never spoken in public ; but he came off with applause. The king attended and commended his sermon. The generality of the congregation were gaping for a flattering discourse, and thought that he would preach for a bishopric, but found that he thought more of acquitting himself like a good Christian orator than of gaining promotion by a fawning, fulsome discourse, which in truth would have been not only below his own dignity to have uttered, but an affront to his royal audience" (if so, how could the doctor have gained promotion by fawning on them?) His text was the 4th chap. of St. Paul to the Galatians, part of the 8th verse : " But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing." The doctor *was* affected about his much but vainly-desired bishopric, which in his eyes was a *very* good thing. His fate was not a hard one. He became, as is well known, an Irish dean, and learned to play backgammon with Mrs. Delany in his pleasant deanery house. It was (as every deanery is) a charming Castle of Idleness compared with the House of Hard Labour in which a conscientious prelate passes his life.

The dean had little sympathy with the good people from whom my next illustration is drawn, the Scottish Presbyterian ministers, some of whom have been as facetious as any others of their vocation in dealing with texts more or less appropriate to the occasion. None more facetious than the Rev. Hamilton Paul. When this minister was about to leave Ayr for



Broughty, he preached a farewell sermon expressly addressed to the ladies, and his text, from the Acts of the Apostles, was, "All wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him." Paul was always ready to have a gibe at the damsels. Near Portobello there is a sea-bathing place named Joppa, and Paul's congregation was once thinned by the number of his female votaries who went thither. On the Sabbath after their wending he preached from the text, "Send men to Joppa." He improved the occasion of the mysterious disappearance of one of his parishioners, Moses Marshall, by selecting for his text the passage from the 32nd chapter of Exodus, "As for this Moses, we wot not what is become of him."\*

Many curiosities in texts have been simply invented for amusement. The same illustrations are to be found in the church gossip of all countries, where the idiom is suitable. It is the same with a legion of church tales. They belong to every community, and to none in particular. In the *ana* of all churches is to be found that improvident clergyman who preached every Sunday, but hid himself during the remainder of the week, to escape from his creditors, and of whom it has been said, in all nations, that he was invisible during six days of the week, and incomprehensible on the seventh.

Equally universal are the personages of another

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\* "Biggar and the House of Fleming," by W. Hunter.



story, laid in the time when men and women sat apart in the churches. The preacher, hearing some talking, paused and looked around, on which a zealous woman arose and said, "Sir, the voice does not come from this side!" To which the reply came from the pulpit, "So much the better; it will be the sooner over!" And alike belongeth to the lighter ecclesiastical records of all countries that incident of a preacher using the words, "All men are liars!" and everywhere another zealous woman starts up from among her sisters and quietly remarks, "Then you too must be a liar!" "Nay," rejoins the preacher, "what I say is the truth!" "Then," replies the imperturbable commentator, "all men are *not* liars!"

Of course it was the celebrated South who, when preaching in the Chapel Royal before the most religious and gracious Charles II., saw that the king was asleep, and consequently many of the courtiers: whereupon Dr. South called aloud to Lord Lauderdale, and begged him not to snore so stentoriously, for fear he should waken his sacred majesty. At least, a very similar story is told of Father Séraphin. He was preaching in presence of Louis XIV. on an oppressively hot day; but he was too good a courtier to suppose that the king was drowsy, and he interrupted the course of his teaching and said, in a clear voice, "Wake that abbé" (it was Fénelon) "who is fast asleep, and who probably only came here to pay court to the king." His majesty aroused himself and smiled.

There is one incident, however, which incontestably belongs to our ecclesiastical annals alone. The poet Young was one of George II.'s chaplains, and was preaching before that king and his Court, most of whom who were not sleeping were whispering, or listening to whispers. At the end of a polished phrase, the royal chaplain ventured to look at his Sovereign, and he saw "great Brunswick with his head fallen back, his mouth wide open, and his eyes, with all senses, closely shut." The pride of the chaplain was so ruffled, that he fairly and awkwardly burst into tears. He forgot that it was the fashion not to listen to the preacher in the Chapel Royal, and in the churches where fashionable people resorted.

Some stories that have become general church property may be traced to their proper owners or heroes. We have all heard of the artisan who, hearing a preacher state that he should divide his sermon into twenty-two heads, hastily quitted the church, with the remark to one who questioned him as to whither he was going so hurriedly, "I am going for my night-cap, as I see we shall have to pass the night here." This incident, however, is historical, and it occurred while M. de Harlai, who was Archbishop of Rouen from 1616 to 1651, preached at one of the churches in that city, and announced the alarming divisional process with which he intended to challenge the attention of his audience.

Again, there is not a pulpit of any nation which does not present to us the person of that simple,

rather than logically-minded priest, who remarked, as one evidence of the especial goodness of God towards trading nations, that He had always granted navigable rivers to great commercial cities. Through the churches, moreover, of whatever country I happen to pass, in each I encounter that other simple clergyman who observed that, during his absence, a preacher who had taken his place had filled the church with crowds of eager and delighted hearers, and caused the greatest excitement generally in the hitherto quiet parish. "But," observes the original incumbent, "I soon altered all that, and restored things to their old condition of peace and quietness!" The French Church, however, claims the honour of having possessed the original author of this remark, which is universally assigned to Father Harrouis. This not very acute Jesuit said to Ménage, "Sir, when Father Bourdaloue preached last year at Rouen, the artisans left their shops to go and listen to him; the merchants quitted their counting-houses; the lawyers left the courts; the doctors their patients, who were probably all the better for it: but when I followed him as preacher I set everything in order again, and everybody minded his own business!"

Common, too, at least to most European countries, is that incident which shows us a stranger sitting beneath a pulpit, and noting, loud enough to be heard, the preacher's plagiarisms: "That's Sherlock!" "That's Barrow!" "That's South!" and so on, till the exasperated cleric, looking down upon his savage

commentator, bade him be silent if he did not wish to be ejected from the church; at which original passage the intruder frankly exclaimed, "*That's his own!*" In France, Italy, Spain, and Germany, this story is told with only the necessary variations for its suitable localization.

If Father Harrouis is the hero of one story which has been appropriated by other nations, so is Flechier the undoubted hero of another which is common, not so much to all churches as to all countries. It is to this effect. An ecclesiastic of rank spoke sneeringly of that great man's very humble origin. "It cannot be gainsaid," answered Flechier; "and if yours had been as humble you would have remained in the station in which you were born."

More old stories again, and more old wit have been made applicable to Mr. Spurgeon than to any other individual. One is now in circulation, of which not *he* but Adolphus Gunn is the hero, and it is a century old. The story runs thus:—A preacher who did not agree with him called at his house, on controversy bent. The visitor bade the maid tell Mr. Gunn that "A servant of the Lord wished to speak with him." But Gunn knew who his visitor was. "Tell the servant of the Lord," he said, "that I am busy with his Master!"

We have another illustration of this subject in the following anecdote, which is well known, but which has also got a hundred heroes. The real one is seldom, if ever, named, yet Walpole first gave the name when

he thus told the story :—" A Dr. Suckling, who married a niece of my father, quarrelled with a country squire, who said, ' Doctor, your gown is your protection.' ' Is it so?' replied the parson, ' but, by G—, it shall not be yours!' pulled it off and thrashed him, I was going to say, damnably, at least, divinely!"

Then history repeats itself in other ways. The story of Lady Cork and Sidney Smith is to be partly traced to one of Whitfield and Lady Huntingdon. The former had asked Lady Huntingdon for forty pounds, for holy purposes. As the good lady had not so much by her, Whitfield pointed to her watch and chain as needless vanities, and constrained her to yield them to him. A fortnight later, Lady Huntingdon, being in Mrs. Whitfield's dressing-room, saw the watch and chain among that lady's ornaments. A quarrel is said to have ensued. Contemporary scoffers hoped the tale was true; but there may be earlier editions of the legend even than the one which has Whitfield for its questionable hero.

No story again is more common than that which says of the Rev. Dr. Cumming that although he is continually prophesying the end of the world as being imminent, he has either bought or sold the lease of a house with sixty or seventy years to run. This story, in a slightly altered form, began with Whiston early in the last century. He preached and prophesied that the Millennium was at hand, and the Restoration of the Jews was to accompany or be a consequence of it. At the same time he offered some property for sale at

thirty years' purchase. "Mr. Whiston," said one to whom the offer was made, "I'm surprised at you. Thirty years' purchase! Why, sir, you yourself know better than any other man that long before a quarter of the term has expired all things will be in common!"

Finally, we find the same sort of story made applicable at the same time to various personages. Sir Jonathan Trelawny was a bishop and a baronet at the close of the seventeenth, and beginning of the eighteenth century, and he hoped not to be damned as a bishop for the profane oaths which fell, as he said, from the lips of the baronet. Sir Jonathan, or some wit for him, seems to be at least partner with Burnet (who was also a bishop in those two centuries) in a smart saying which, after all, may have originated in another quarter. A clerical gentleman asked the latter prelate if he might not, on the authority of St. Bernard, hold two livings at the same time. "How would you do the duty?" "Oh," said the would-be pluralist, "I would do the duty in one of the livings by deputy." "Aye, but," rejoined the bishop, "you would be damned in your own person." There is a saying often attributed as originally belonging to the Duke of Wellington, and which is to the salutary effect that "when a man thinks of turning in bed, it is time to turn out." But this wholesome maxim belongs, not to the army but to the Church. It was first uttered by Anthony Bek, Bishop of Durham (1283-1311), the only prelate who dared touch the bones of St. William of York, at that Saint's *translation*, when

the bones would have flung themselves at the head of any man of impure life who should presume to lay his finger on them. "I don't call that fellow a *man*," said the bishop, "who, once awake, turns from one side to the other before he rises!" Bishop Anthony did not, however, always jump out of bed for any particularly divine purpose. He was one of the mighty ecclesiastical huntsmen of old, his kennels were a sight to see, and his stables far beyond the conception of modern ideas. This prelate "rode to hounds" with a zest which would have been inexplicable to that famous man among his successors, Butler of the "Analogy."

Finally, all over the world is to be found the audacious young cleric who, boldly seating himself at dinner near his bishop, asked, "Who preached to-day?" "I preached myself," said the prelate. "Did you indeed?" rejoined the priest. "*That* is what St. Paul didn't do; *he* preached Christ crucified!" The latest bishop who figures in this story is the late Roman Catholic "J. K. L.," of Down, Kildare, and Leighlin.

We have seen what many of these more or less worthy personages were in their profession. Let us now glance at them in their hours of ease. We have seen the style in Church; let us look (in another volume) at the style at Home.













